

THE PILGRIM

VOL. 11

JANUARY, 1964

NO. I

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

NEW YEAR

New years coming, one by one,
From a new beginning,
From first dawn of rising sun,
World was set to spinning.

Onward marches time of years,
Tramping through the ages,
Bringing mankind hopes and fears,
Record on life's pages.

Steady rolling on and on,
Day the night is chasing,
To eternity's fair dawn
Swiftly we are racing.

Whirling in the starry sky,
In God's timely order,
Round and rounded by and by,
Border unto border.

All appointed pathways keep,
Station unto station,
Wakening to fall asleep,
Nation after nation.

New Year comes as old year goes,
Milestones pass reviewing,
Like a mighty river flows
To the grand renewing.

—J.I. Cover

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published monthly by Daniel F. Wolf in the interests of the members of The Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$1.50 per year. Sample copies sent free on request. Address: THE PILGRIM, Rt. 3, Box 1378, Modesto, Calif.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

The year 1964 has begun and we are rapidly moving ahead in the second half of the twentieth century. A brother minister recently said, "We are nearer to our goal than we have ever been before; and much nearer than our fathers were."

Some of our fathers looked forward to the times in which we now live with amazement and some anxiety and wondered if our generation could remain faithful to Christ and his Church in an increasingly wicked and deceptive world, employing every possible deceptive device known to Satan in a last desperate effort to defeat God's kingdom on earth.

Now we are living in the times which they wondered at. Some of us have passed the zenith of our lives and are hastening toward the end. But other children are being born of faithful parents who in turn wonder, as our fathers did, what their children will have to endure to be overcomers of Satan and the world, and be faithful unto the end.

We know that the intensity of the conflict will increase as we near the end, perhaps of a more spiritual and deceptive nature than of physical persecution as in past ages. But with no less demand that Christians forsake the humble God-fearing way of the cross and join the world in all of its revelings and banquetings and wars and fears. For it is said that the devil is filled with wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time.

We believe the strongest and most effective weapon which parents can put into the hearts and hands of their children, is a living acquaintance with, and an unfailling devotional faith in, THE WORD OF GOD. For in the last verse of Rev. 12 it is said, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Satan knows that faith in God and the testimony of Jesus Christ is the ultimate and decisive weapon of the saints of God in every generation, and is the only effective weapon and shield in any age that can overcome the devil in his war against the kingdom of God. So now he seeks by every possible means to destroy faith in God and his WORD. When Satan was defeated in the war in heaven, and cast out into the earth, it was said in the great triumphant victory song, "and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. 12: 10, 11.

Enoch lived in a time that must have been extremely wicked, but he had faith in God that he would ultimately become victorious over all ungodly sinners that oppose him, and he walked so closely with God that He translated him out of this world without seeing death.

Elijah lived and witnessed for God in a most difficult time. When he saw his own nation (the only people on earth that knew God at that time) wholly turned to idolatry, he boldly challenged the false prophets of idol worship and slew them, and then himself fled for his own life when he thought he was the only righteous person left on earth. But God sustained him in a miraculous way and revealed to him that He still had seven thousand persons unknown to Elijah who had not bowed the knee to Baal, and then took him up to heaven, also, in a chariot of fire that he should not see death.

Thus in every age God has sustained those who remained faithful to him in trying times that from a human point of view appeared hopeless. For it is said in his word that he knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.

There perhaps was never another time when wickedness was so matured that faith in God was so near zero as in the days of Noah. The Bible seems to indicate that Noah preached for 120 years, yet there were only eight saved. It is said that the whole imagination of the heart of man was only evil continually, and it repented God that he had made man and grieved him at his heart. This was perhaps the darkest

time the world has yet seen. And Jesus says, "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." Many signs indicate that we have already come into such times, only they are not yet fully matured. Again Jesus says, "When I come, shall I find faith on the earth?" By the grace of God we must so live that those who are living when he comes may answer "yes" when they see him.

The apostle John says, "It is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist should come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." If John's was the beginning of the last time, surely ours must be very near the close of it. One hymn says, "We are living, we are dwelling in a grand and awful time— In an age on ages telling: To be living is sublime."

Perhaps we are too accustomed to the marvels of our age to be duly impressed with how marvelous they really are. The marvels of the electronic world: Radio, television, radar, electronic "brains" (computers)— And now the "space age" when scientists are boasting and thrusting themselves out from this earth into God's realm to spy on the secrets of creation which they may be allowed to use in a miraculous way to deceive men into turning away from faith in God who created such things. And while they are making deadly weapons to destroy themselves and mankind, they assume the exalted position of "saviors" of humanity. Some of them claim to believe in God, and many do not. And perhaps few, if any of them, believe in the Word of God, or have a gospel faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and his redemptive plan to save men from sin and hell.

Our fathers have told us of times past which some have claimed were better than the times in which we live now. And sometimes our imaginations have been fired and we would like to have lived in some of those times. But however good or evil they may have been, it is certain that we cannot live in times that were not ours, and are past. But this is our time. We

can do nothing that can effect the past, but what we do now can determine our destiny in the future and have an influence for good or evil on our children.

The daily news are beaming signs that seem to answer to what is foretold in Revelation 12 and 13. The Ecumenical Movement sponsored by Papal Rome glares with such boldness that it seems more like some of the predictions of our fathers than current news events.

Revelation 12 seems to be the opening scenes of the "last time" for it begins with the birth of the "man child", and the last verse of chapter 12 seems to point to the war of attrition which the dragon began to wage against the church from the apostolic age to the end.

The "beast" of Revelation 13 seems to answer to the fourth beast of Daniel 7 which we know now was the Roman Empire that succeeded and included the three former World Empires of Babylon, Persia, and Greece.

In 410 A.D. when Imperial Rome fell, Papal Rome (an apostate ecclesiastical power) succeeded to the throne of the Emperors and continued to rule the Empire for approximately another one thousand years.

This seems to answer to the "other" beast of Revelation 13 that looked like a lamb but spoke as a dragon. He is a "pretender lamb" and is identified in Revelation 19 as the False Prophet. It is very significant in Revelation 13 that this second beast exercises all the power of the first beast before him. For it is a historical fact that Papal Rome continued with increasing fury to persecute and destroy the true church of Jesus Christ as the Caesars had done under the imperial rule.

Thus we are told that this pretender lamb or second beast moves the peoples of the earth to make an image to the first beast and give it life and power to command allegiance and worship of the first beast on pain of death for any who will not obey.

So today Papal Rome is openly calling ecumenical councils to unify all religion into a world power that without doubt could exercise both religious and economic world power

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EDITORIAL....

O SING UNTO THE LORD A NEW SONG!

12:01 A.M. January 1, 1964 is the beginning of a new year. Even at that first minute, 1963, the old year, is in the past. In II Corinthians 5:17, the Apostle Paul writes: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The very moment a man becomes a new creature in Christ, the old life is in the past, and he takes on a new life.

I mention this because it is the basis for this article on the "new song". The new creature in Christ is given a new song to sing. This song, to me, is not just a song of notes and words; it is our whole attitude and expression to God. And it is very apparent to those around us, and it has its effect.

On the other hand, we can remain in old ways and sing the "old songs" which will also be easily seen by those around us and will also have their effect. This condition should cause us to wonder if the "old things are passed away and all things are become new." I believe it is true that this new song can only be sung by a new-born creature walking in the new and living way.

This "new song" is not really new in years of time. Our title is from the Psalms written 3000 years ago. But it is new to the hearts of men. It is cleanly and wonderfully new compared to the old songs and old ways we see and hear around us every day.

For a definition of this new song, read Psalm 40:3. "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Compare this new song of praise to the old songs we hear around us daily. We hear the old song of Complaints. One complains that he didn't sleep well. Another complains about the cold weather. Someone else complains about high taxes, and still others complain that the world is getting worse—things are not what they used to be. We hear the bitter old "song" of cursing, swearing, taking the Lord's name in vain. In this song of Bitterness, we hear the tired old tune

that the world has handed someone a bad deal. He thinks he has not had the chance others have had. Someone is to blame. So, often he blames God for "allowing these things to happen".

Others are singing the old song of Frivolity and Fun. This tune is a little more pleasant and tempting. In it, all is gay and light-hearted. Everything is going fine. The singer is "on top of the world"—at least on the surface. Anyone who will not sing along is considered pretty sour and out of sorts. But beware of this song. It is not the new song of praise to our God and has not the joy it appears to have.

Another "old song" is that of Indifference. This tune is sort of a slow, lazy one and is easy to sing. Its phrases include: "Live and let live", "Everybody is doing it", and "What difference does it make?". This tune drifts with the crowd and has no certain sound or definite direction.

Another song often heard around us is that of Selfishness. This melody is a monotonous one as it always contains the notes of "Give me", "I was first", and "Don't listen to him". Sometimes this one even crowds into our prayers.

There is still another old song that is rehearsed often in the world today and even gains popularity in church circles if we allow it. That is Gossip. This is a cruel song because, while some enjoy singing it, always someone has to suffer when it is sung.

There are many more of these old songs that we could name. How tiresome it must be for the Lord who hears them day after day. They neither honor Him nor recognize His power. And they lead His children astray.

But for His people, God has this new song of Praise. It is a beautiful song—full of honor and devotion to the Lord to Whom it is due. It is uplifting to the singer. It blends with perfect harmony with other attributes of a Christian character. Psalm 40:3 also continues and tells the results of this new song: "many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." Can it be true that when we sing this song of praise we

influence others to fear and trust in the Lord? How diligent we should be to learn and to practice this new song that has so many benefits!

Although this is written as sort of an allegory, it is not just a fancy dream or an unattainable ideal. It can and must be real in our lives and influence everything we do and say. We should "show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light." (I Peter 2:9) This is more than words. It is something to show forth—an entire attitude to have. It becomes "a garment of praise" in exchange for "the spirit of heaviness". (Isaiah 61:3)

As we make new year's resolutions, it is a good time to consider our attitudes and the impressions we are making on those around us. What song are we singing? Are we still singing along with the world on the tunes of Bitterness, Complaint, Selfishness, and Indifference? Or do we have that beautiful new song of Praise to our God in our hearts and on our tongues? If we do not have, let us resolve to change our tunes. Someday, if we are faithful, we can join with the great company mentioned in Revelation 5 to sing the new song of praise in Glory: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

—L.G.

I WANT TO LIVE A LIFE, DEAR LORD,
 THAT THOSE AROUND MAY SEE
 THE GLORY OF THY RIGHTEOUSNESS
 EXEMPLIFIED IN ME.
 OH, DEMONSTRATE THY MIGHTY POWER
 TO MAKE THE SINNER WHOLE,
 CONTROL MY MIND, POSSESS MY HEART,
 AND FILL MY EMPTY SOUL.

—Selected by Mart Schmidt

CHRIST AND WAR

By D. Vaniman

Christ, its Author says, "Love your enemies." War says, "Hate them."

Christ says, "Do them good." War says, "Do them harm."

Christ says, "Pray for them." War says, "Slay them."

Christ says, "Bless them." War says, "Curse them."

Christ says, "I come not to destroy men's lives; but to save them." War says, "I come to destroy men's lives; and for this very purpose I want the most effectual weapons that can be invented."

Christ says, "Overcome evil with good." War says, "Render evil for evil and more of it."

Paul says, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him." War says, "Destroy his wells, cut off his supplies of every kind."

Paul says, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal." War says, "Ours are carnal; bring on the sword and spear, the musket and cannon, with plenty of powder, and shot and shell."

Paul says, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood." War says, "We do wrestle against flesh and blood. Crowd them to the wall, and into the last ditch; utterly destroy them if they don't submit."

War unbridles the lusts and passions of man's depraved nature, destroys morals, imposes heavy burdens upon productive industries, makes widows and orphans, wastes money, begets envy, hatred, variance, wrath, strife, sedition, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like, of which Paul says: "I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians 5:21)

—Selected by
Durand Overholtzer

HYMN STUDY

A SONG IS BORN

Some years ago a young girl by the name of Charlotte Elliott was preparing to attend a ball to be given in her home town. While on her way to have a dress made for the occasion, she met her pastor. He reasoned with her to stay away from the ball. Miss Elliott was greatly disturbed by his comments and said: "I wish you would mind your own business!" and went on her wayward course.

The social event was held as scheduled, and this young girl was the gayest of the gay. After dancing all night, laying her weary head on her pillow, she was far from happy. Her pastor had always been a loving, cherished friend and her rudeness to him bothered her conscience. And, more than that, the truth of his words came to her mind and wouldn't give her any rest. After three days of misery she went to her minister with her trouble, saying, "For three days I have been the most wretched girl in the world, and now I want to be a Christian—what must I do?"

"Just give yourself, my child, to the Lamb of God as you are."

"What! Just as I am?" she asked. "Do you know that I am one of the worst sinners in the world? How can God accept me as I am?"

"This is exactly what you must believe," was the answer, "You must come to Him just as you are."

The young girl knelt down and offered her heart to God, guilty and vile as it was, to be cleansed. As she knelt, peace—full, overflowing—filled her soul. Inspired by the new and glorious experience, she then and there wrote the hymn—

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings within, and fears without
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind,
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea all I need, in Thee to find
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, Thy love unknown
Hath broken every barrier down;
Now, to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Charlotte Elliott was simply putting her heart experience on paper, but this song is really a whole library of theology packed into a few lines. The faith of Charlotte Elliott is now sung around the world. After her death more than a thousand letters were found thanking her for this hymn. Is this your faith? I don't mean can you sing the words, but have you ever really meant it from the depth of your heart as Charlotte Elliott did?

—The Mennonite Hour Broadcast

"Liberty does not consist in being allowed to be our worst, but the right to become our best."

—The Youth's Visitor

Over two thousand years ago, Cicero, the Roman Philosopher and statesman, said that the six mistakes of man are:

1. The delusion that individual advancement is made by crushing others;
2. The tendency to worry about things that cannot be changed or corrected;
3. Insisting that a thing is impossible because we cannot accomplish it;
4. Refusing to set aside trivial preferences;
5. Neglecting development and refinement of the mind, and not acquiring the habit of reading and study;
6. Attempting to compel other persons to believe and live as we do.

We shall attempt to do more than avoid mistakes. Avoiding mistakes will not be considered a positive program. There are seven things of a positive nature which I would like to suggest as a general framework in which to operate.

"FOUR THINGS" BY HENRY VAN DYKE

Four things a man must learn to do if he would keep his record true:

- To think without confusion clearly
- To love his fellowmen sincerely
- To act from honest motives purely
- To trust in God and Heaven securely

"THREE THINGS" BY THE PROPHET MICAH

He hath showed Thee O man what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God.

If in facing our common task we use the spiritual and human resources which are so abundantly available we cannot fail. If we do not we cannot succeed. Deuteronomy 33:27—"The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms."

—Selected

Historical

DOES THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH GO BACK TO THE APOSTLES?

Oswald J. Smith

The Roman Catholic Church appeared for the first time in the fifth century. For the first four centuries Christians followed the teachings of the Apostles, as recorded in the New Testament. Then Roman Catholicism gradually took over and superseded the Bible, so that the Apostolic Church became the Roman Catholic Church. None of the Christians of the first four centuries was Roman Catholic, for there was no Roman Catholic Church at that time.

When the fourth century ended, the churches were under the jurisdiction of five patriarchs of equal authority. Finally there were just two—the one in Rome and the one in Constantinople. The word "pope" was first applied to Western bishops, and it was not until A.D. 500 that it was restricted to the Bishop of Rome, who sought to be recognized as the universal bishop of the Church. That claim, however, was never accepted by the whole Church.

It was natural, perhaps, that the Church, founded during the days of the Roman Empire, should finally accept that form of government and become the autocratic organization that it has, and be ruled from the top by a pope, but, as I have already stated, it did not happen all at once. It was five hundred years before such a government appeared and before the Roman Catholic Church existed.

THE FIRST POPE

Roman Catholicism tells us that Peter was the first pope and that he resided in Rome. That is pure fiction. There is not the slightest evidence that Peter ever saw Rome. Most certainly Peter made no such claim for himself or his successors. In fact he spoke against

"lording it over God's flock". (I Peter 5:3)

Pope Leo I (440-61) was the first to proclaim himself head of the whole Church. However, the Council of Chalcedon (451), which was the Fourth Ecumenical Council, granted the Patriarch of Constantinople equal prerogatives and did not recognize the Patriarch of Rome as his superior.

Gregory I (590-604) is considered by some as the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church. But when the Patriarch of Constantinople declared that he himself was the universal bishop, Gregory was greatly aggravated. He refused to recognize him and would not allow the term to be applied to himself, stating that anyone who made such a claim was the forerunner of the Antichrist.

Charlemagne, under Pope Leo III (795-819), was the ruler who brought the Papacy to its position as a world Power. Nicholas I (858-67) through the forgeries of ancient historical documents made it appear that the Papacy had been unchanging from the beginning. These documents were proven to be spurious a few centuries later. They have been spoken of as "the most colossal literary fraud in history." However, they supported the Papacy more than any other agency.

It was Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) who, in 1073, first claimed Universal Authority and sole right to the title "Pope". He was the first to teach that the Church was built on Peter. For 1,000 years there had been no such claims except that of Leo I, whose claim was immediately denied by the Fourth Council.

THE DARK AGES

So far did the popes of Rome depart from the teachings of Jesus and Paul that the Dark Ages set in, and for a thousand years the paganism of Roman Catholicism was in control. The Church and not the Bible became the supreme authority. Christians who held to the teachings of Christ were considered heretics and were bitterly persecuted. At least fifty million of them perished by torture and death at the hands of Rome.

Whereas Christ and His Apostles taught salvation by faith, Rome introduced salvation by works. Church councils proclaimed doctrines and dogmas utterly contrary to the Word of God. The Dark Ages continued until God raised up Martin Luther to combat the errors of Rome and restore the doctrines and practices of the early Church.

During the past three hundred years we have again, in the various evangelical denominations, the Church of the first four centuries. The darkness of Romanism has disappeared, and the glorious light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ has burst forth. The Roman Catholic Church is not the Church Jesus Christ founded. Neither its doctrines nor its practices can be recognized in the New Testament. The Church founded by Christ and His Apostles, and especially by Paul, is the Church of all the evangelicals of all denominations that believe and teach the Bible and proclaim salvation without money and without price. On this tremendous truth it is bound together regardless of its differences on minor issues. "The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord." Not Peter, but Christ. All are one in Him regardless of denominational affiliation. The Roman Catholic Church, on the other hand, has betrayed the Faith, trampled underfoot the great doctrines of grace, and condemned as heretics the true followers of the Saviour.

THE FIRST FIVE CENTURIES

Few of the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church were held by the Christians of the first five centuries, nor are they to be found in the New Testament Scriptures. No priest was forbidden to marry. There were no images in the churches. Mass was unknown. There was no confessional and no purgatory. There were no prayers to Mary and no beads or rosaries. All were foreign both to the early Christians and the New Testament. The doctrines and practices of the New Testament were observed by the entire Christian Church, and the New Testament was completed before the close of the

first century. As a matter of fact, it was written by those who had lived in the days of Jesus and it was accepted as authoritative. Catholic belief, dogmas and practices were all invented later and are not to be found anywhere in the Bible. Paul's letters were accepted by Peter as Scripture long before they were passed down by a church council (II Peter 3:2, 15-16).

It was A.D. 310 before prayers for the dead were said. It was A.D. 320 when wax candles were introduced. It was A.D. 375 before there was any worship of the saints and angels. Mass was not said until A.D. 394. There was no worship of the Virgin Mary until A.D. 431. The doctrine of Purgatory was first taught in A.D. 593. It was in A.D. 788 that the worship of images and relics was authorized. Celibacy for priests was decreed in A.D. 1074. Prayer Beads were not invented until A.D. 1090. Confession commenced in A.D. 1215. The Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary was decreed in A.D. 1854. It was not until A.D. 1870 that the pope was decreed infallible. The Assumption of Mary was made a dogma in A.D. 1950.

That is why none of these doctrines can be found in the Bible. They were decreed by the Church. But it was A.D. 1545 before church tradition was placed on the same level as the Scriptures. Therefore, I say again, the Roman Catholic Church is not the Church of the New Testament. It is as different as day is from night. Nearly all of its dogmas were invented after the New Testament had been written and accepted as we now have it, and most of them from 400 to 500 years or more after Christ. I could give the dates—and they are very late—for all its other dogmas and practices, but the above will suffice.

THE BIBLE COMES FIRST

With Catholics the Church comes first and the Bible second; whereas with Evangelicals, the Bible always comes first and is the final court of appeal. The Bible says: "They searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so." (Acts 17:11) Hence the Scriptures, not Peter, not the pope, not church leaders or

councils, but the Old Testament Scriptures settled everything. Even the preaching of Paul—the greatest of all the Apostles—was tested by the Scriptures, according to Acts 17:11. It was common people and not the priests who searched the Scriptures.

What does the Bible say? Listen: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isaiah 8:20) The Bible, then, is the final word. It is not what the Church says but what the Scriptures say. Catholics do not believe that. They put the Church first, yet Peter based his first two sermons on the Bible.

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Revelation 22:18,19) The Catholic Church both adds and takes away. So it stands condemned. (Deuteronomy 4:2)

The Pope is infallible, say the Catholics. Which Pope? I ask. Sometimes there were two and even three, all claiming to be the Pope and each denouncing the other. Which, I ask, was the true Pope? Which was infallible? Have you read church history? Do you know that the Popes contradicted each other? Do you realize that the apostolic succession of Popes has been broken? Do you know about the awful sins of immorality, theft, and murder, committed by the Popes from A.D. 904 to 1046? Could they have been infallible? Have you read church history, I say? If not, then before you disagree, read it; read it for yourself. You will find the whole revolting record in Halléy's "Pocket Bible Handbook", nineteenth edition, page 684. It is shocking beyond words.

No, my friend, not the Pope, not the Church, but the Bible. It alone is unchangeable. There is no other

authority. Man, the Church and the Pope err. The Bible is God's infallible, inspired Word.

Let us always remember that the Roman Catholic Church does not date back to the days of the Apostles, and that it was not the first church; that Peter and Paul did not belong to it or, infact, know anything about it, since it did not come into existence until the fifth century. The early Christian martyrs did not know it, and it can take no credit for them. None of the Christians in the catacombs of Rome was Roman Catholic.

Thank God for Martin Luther and the Reformation. Thank God for a man who had the courage to stand against the Pope and Emperor, that the masses might be emancipated from the earth's most heartless tyrant. Had it not been for the Reformation, mankind might never have been free from the shackles of Rome.

(Used by permission of the author)

Signs of the Times (continued from page 5)

This image is probably what is now called in the political world a "front", and it is this image which is not yet identified. Perhaps we should not be hasty in our conclusion as to the location and name of this image or "front". But it would appear that the power and seat of its authority is the same as has always been and which our fathers and the faithful martyrs knew only too well. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."-D.F.W.

Meditation verse:

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Hebrews 11:6

CHILDREN'S PAGE

THE WISE MEN'S VISIT

King Herod lived in Jerusalem at the time Jesus was born. The King was old and was not a kind man. He received many gifts, but they were not gifts of love. They were given to win his favor.

Soon after the birth of Jesus, some strangers came to the gates of Jerusalem. They were searching for the newborn King of the Jews.

The Strangers said, "We have seen His star in the east and we have traveled many miles to worship Him.

This was news to all who heard it. Where was the newborn King? What will happen when wicked King Herod heard of another who was King of the Jews?

News of the strange visitors reached the palace! King Herod was troubled. The King called all the chief priests and scribes. He ask many questions. "When should Christ be born? Who are these strange men?"

"These men are Wise men who have come from the east," they said. "They saw a light in the sky which told of the birth of a new king. They have come to worship him. They have brought fine gifts with them."

Fine gifts are not for a baby thought greedy King Herod.

The kings men said, "The scrolls in the Temple foretell the birth of the Christ Child. The prophets say He will be born in Bethlehem.

The King sent for the Wise men. "Go to Bethlehem and search very hard for the young child. Please bring me word back again for I would like to go and worship Him too." How wicked and crafty King Herod really was!

The Wise men started to Bethlehem. They looked in the sky and there was the bright star shining again. The star led them to the place where the child Jesus was. They rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

God warned the Wise men about Herod and so they departed into their own country another way. God was watching over the little child Jesus. — R.S.

BIBLE CHARACTERS

DORCAS

A great example and lesson is portrayed in the life and works of this seldom mentioned follower of the Lord.

This woman lived in the sea trading town of Joppa, northeast of Jerusalem on the Mediterranean sea coast. We read that Dorcas was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. Joppa, no doubt, was populated by many poor and needy people. To these, Dorcas was a great blessing and was dearly loved by all those who had shared in her acts of charity and love.

What concern and sorrow were felt throughout Joppa when it was learned that Dorcas was very sick. Many tears were shed when this virtuous disciple died. When certain of the Christians in Joppa heard that Peter was nearby in the town of Lydda, they hastily sent for him to come, no doubt having faith that Peter would be able to somehow compensate for this great loss.

Peter was moved with sorrow and compassion when he was shown the works this kind disciple had wrought. Asking all to leave the room, Peter knelt and prayed. Then, exercising his absolute faith in God, he spoke, "Tabitha, arise!" Dorcas (so named through interpretation) opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. Taking Dorcas by the hand, Peter led her forth from the room and presented her to the saints and widows.

Because of this miracle, the scriptures tell us that many believed on the Lord.

-Joseph Wagner

Sonora, California

THE PILGRIM

VOL. 11

FEBRUARY, 1964

NO. 2

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

I LAY MY SINS ON JESUS

I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God;
He bears them all and frees us
From the accursed load:
I bring my guilt to Jesus,
To wash my crimson stains
White in His blood most precious,
Till not a stain remains.

I lay my wants on Jesus,
All fullness dwells in Him;
He healeth my diseases,
He doth my soul redeem:
I lay my griefs on Jesus,
My burdens and my cares;
He from them all releases,
He all my sorrows shares.

I long to be like Jesus,
Meek, loving, lowly, mild;
I long to be like Jesus,
The Father's holy child;
I long to be with Jesus
Amid the heav'nly throng;
To sing with saints His praises,
And learn the angels' song.

— by Horatius Bonar
Spiritual Songs and Hymns

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published monthly by Daniel F. Wolf in the interests of the members of The Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$1.50 per year. Sample copies sent free on request. Address: THE PILGRIM, Rt. 3, Box 1378, Modesto, Calif.

THE ALL SUFFICIENCY OF THE LOVE OF GOD

That God gave His only Son to suffer, bleed, and die upon the cross of Calvary for the purpose of redemption and reconciliation of hopeless humanity, they being without God and without hope in the world because of defilement by sin and alienation from God, is the highest and fullest demonstration of His love. Pure and undefiled love; love that can embrace the vilest sinner whose sins may be as scarlet or crimson red, yet can be made white as snow when he makes a full surrender to God's loving appeal and the terms of the most loving God.

And this love of God, when transmitted into the hearts of mankind, must and will bear the same elements of good will and compassion to fellow mankind. Love is the fulfilling of God's law, and it worketh no ill to its neighbor. Love is the crowning attribute of the Christian religion. The loving apostle Peter has written in I Peter 4:8, "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." Yes, Charity suffereth long and is kind...seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked. It never faileth and will reach the zenith of its glory in the realms of Eternal bliss.

Love and hate can not dwell together. He that hateth his brother is a murderer, and we know will not inherit Eternal Life. Love and lust are not compatible with each other. Even though lust may have a semblance of love, it is misleading and can lead to the loss of eternal happiness. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world, And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Glorious truth abideth forever.

John, the apostle of love, has written, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God...for God is love." What precious words are these: "There is no fear in love." Perfect love casteth out fear. Fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. Love is the sweetest bud that blows, Its beauty never dies, On earth among the saints it grows, And ripens in the skies. Oh the love of God that He has provided that Holy City where He will dwell with His saints, be their God, and they His people, when He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, and no more pain, for the former things have passed away. May love that shining grace, O'er all my powers preside, Direct my thoughts, suggest my words, And every action guide.

—David A. Skiles
Rossville, Indiana

A few weeks ago, as I left my job and headed for my car, I found that I had left my car keys in the ignition and had locked the doors. I was locked out! I had been careless to leave my keys inside the car. And it was only with some time and patience and a piece of string that I was able to open one door.

It made me think that we can "lock ourselves out" in other ways. Through carelessness in our spiritual life we can be locked out of blessings that we should possess. By being careless about our Bible reading, we become "locked out" when we could have comfort and promise from God's word. By being careless in our association with our friends, we can become locked out of their confidence and fellowship. Through carelessness of our prayer life, we can become locked out of the place of peace and harmony with God. By neglecting to help others, we can be locked out when we are in need. By being careless about the oil in our lamps, we can eventually be locked out of the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Let us not allow carelessness to lock the doors to blessings that the Lord had intended for us. —L.C.

THE PRAYER COVERING FOR CHRISTIAN WOMEN

This simple ordinance, enjoined by the apostle Paul in I Cor. 11: 1-16, can be more easily understood if two principle points regarding it are clearly kept in mind: First, The context includes both men and women how each shall present themselves in proper order for prayer or prophesying. And, secondly, It is a SIGN of recognition of, and submission to, God's order of headship and authority in the home and church.

"For the head of every man is Christ: and the head of the woman is the man: and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesyeth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head."

Therefore, when praying or prophesying, the man removes the covering from his head in honour of Christ, for Christ is the head of the man. But the woman puts a covering on her head in honour of the man who is the head of the woman.

It is obvious, then, that the covering referred to here cannot be the hair, for it could not be consistently applicable to both men and women as enjoined in this text. To interpret it so would mean that a man would need to shave his head to be in proper order to pray or prophesy.

It may be that the meaning and implications of this order is better understood than many are willing to admit. It is still an almost universal custom, in our part of the world, for men to remove their hats when in worship or in any attitude of honour or respect for authority. But because it is more conspicuous for a woman to put on her SIGN of recognition of the headship and authority which she is under, by the law of her Creator, and because of a false sense of "equality" with men, many women, with the consent of their husbands, disobey this simple but significant ordinance of God.

It is admitted by some of the more learned students of the Bible and history, that it was the custom in Paul's time for Christian women to cover their heads in worship. But they hasten to explain that it was because women, at that time, were "ignorant" (uneducated) and were dependent upon their husbands for information and guidance. But now, since the "emancipation" of women, it is no longer necessary, etc.

It is true that woman's position in modern society has changed greatly, and in most ways women claim equality with men. But it is not proven that this change is for the better, for with it has come a marked degeneracy of morals in the home and society, and the fearful divorce evil, broken homes, and an accelerated increase in juvenile crimes.

In praying or prophesying, we are either speaking to God or of him. How important, then, if we wish for God to answer our prayers, to honour him by obeying the SIGNS of honour and authority which he has ordained.— D. F. Wolf

THOUGH HE SLAY ME, YET WILL I TRUST IN HIM...

Job 13:15

Men and women of today are as susceptible to trouble as they were centuries ago in Job's time. Sometimes the reasons for our trouble are obvious. But many times we are brought low and really do not understand why. It is in these times that we really need to trust that God knows best. And it is about these times that I would like to offer a few thoughts.

The account of Job and his sore trouble is a very valuable part of the scriptures because in it we can see the causes that Job could not see at the time. We see that Job was tried because of the taunts and challenges of the adversary against God. Job could not understand at the time, but he could say these wonderful words, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him..." Other passages also tell of Job's steadfast faith in God though he complained bitterly.

Can we submit to the fact that it is God's privilege to try us as He tried Job? When we have deep sorrow, perplexity, pain, or disappointment, do we plead with God to remove it? I am sure I do. But do we also ask God to show us how to come through victorious and to glorify Him in this way? Our trust in God should be the kind that recognizes God's greater intelligence, His clearer vision, and His power to deliver us. He knows what is best.

It has been a searching thought to me when I think of Romans 8:28, "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." If we believe this, then we must either be patient and trusting in trouble or we must question our own love for God. The verse says all things work together for good.

God has given us many promises regarding our troubles. Psalm 91:15: He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble. Jesus said: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Let us say with Job: "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."—L.C.

WAIT THOU ONLY UPON GOD
(Isaiah 64:4; Psalm 62:5)

by Freda Hanbury

"Wait only upon God"; my soul, be still,
And let thy God unfold His perfect will,
Thou fain would'st follow Him throughout this year,
Thou fain with listening heart His voice would'st hear,
Thou fain would'st be a passive instrument
Possessed by God, and ever Spirit-sent
Upon His service sweet—then be thou still,
For only thus can He in thee fulfill
His heart's desire. Oh, hinder not His hand
From fashioning the vessel He hath planned.
"Be silent unto God," and thou shalt know
The quiet, holy calm He doth bestow
On those who wait on Him; so shalt thou bear
His presence, and His life and light e'en where
The night is darkest, and thine earthly days
Shall show His love, and sound His glorious praise.
And He will work with hand unfettered, free,
His high and holy purposes through thee.
First on thee must that hand of power be turned,
Till in His love's strong fire thy dross is burned,
And thou come forth a vessel for thy Lord,
So frail and empty, yet since He hath poured
Into thine emptiness His life, His love,
Henceforth through thee the power of God shall move
And He will work for thee. Stand still and see
The victories thy God will gain for thee;
So silent, yet so irresistible,
Thy God shall do the thing impossible,
Oh, question not henceforth what thou canst do;
Thou canst do nought, But He will carry through
The work where human energy had failed
Where all thy best endeavors had availed
Thee nothing. Then, my soul, wait and be still;
Thy God shall work for thee His perfect will.
If thou wilt take no less, His best shall be
Thy portion now and through eternity.

—Selected by Richard Skiles

HYMN STUDY

GLORIOUS THINGS OF THEE ARE SPOKEN

by John Newton

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!

He whose word can not be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode.

On the rock of ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?

With salvation's wall surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

Blest inhabitants of Zion,
Washed in the Redeemer's blood!

Jesus, whom their souls rely on,
Makes them kings and priests to God!

'Tis his love his people raises

Over self to reign as kings:

And as priests his solemn praises

Each for a thank offering brings.

Savior, if of Zion's city

I through grace a member am;

Let the world deride or pity,

I will glory in thy name:

Fading is the worldling's pleasure,

All his boasted pomp and show!

Solid joys and lasting treasure,

None but Zion's children know.

John Newton (1725-1807) is said to have done more than any other to promote the Evangelical spirit in the formal established Church of England of his time. His early life would certainly not indicate that he would become a spiritual leader. After his mother died when he was seven, he was placed in a boarding school as his father was a sea captain. He quit school at the age of ten and went to sea with his father at eleven. At the age of eighteen, he was forced to enlist on a "man-of-war" ship. His father could not get him

released but was able to have him promoted to a midshipman. He hated this life and deserted. But he was caught, whipped, put in irons, and degraded to a common sailor. Embittered, he was placed on a slave ship bound for Africa. Regarding this period of his life, Newton said, "There I could be as abandoned as I pleased without any control." He stayed in Africa for awhile and worked for a slave trader.

Again he went to sea on a trading ship. On this long voyage which eventually took him back to England, he read the book, "Imitation of Christ" by Thomas a Kempis. This and a desperate situation during a storm caused him to turn to the Lord and be converted.

After his conversion, Newton became captain of a slave ship. This was a very dangerous business and evidently not despised so much then as later. Several times he narrowly escaped when his crew conspired against him. He began to read and try to improve his education and religious life. He held worship on his ship twice every Sunday.

He finally realized the inhumanity of the slave trading and left his ship for a life on shore. He began to study for the ministry and chose the established church in preference to the dissenters. After ten years, he was sent to the little village of Olney as an assistant to the bishop there.

He taught and worked in Olney for fifteen years, and here is where his real service began. He told his story of conversion often, and the congregation grew until the church had to be enlarged. He branched out on new methods to improve the spirituality of the church. He held devotional meetings, Bible classes, and began to use new hymns. Feeling the need for more new hymns to express true devotion, he began to write his own. He also persuaded his friend and neighbor, William Cowper, to help him. Together they compiled the collection known as the "Olney Hymns". Newton wrote 281 of these and Cowper wrote 67.

The circumstances under which Newton wrote this hymn are unknown. But its theme is from Psalm 87:3: "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God."

Selah." It originally contained five stanzas. This is a very majestic hymn and speaks of the glories of Zion, the blessings and privileges of the redeemed, and also a resolve to separation from the fading pleasures of the world.

After serving at Olney and compiling the "Olney Hymns", John Newton served for twenty-eight years in a church in London. He died in 1807, the year when one whom he had helped to convert succeeded in putting a bill through Parliament that abolished slavery in all British domains.

Newton's tombstone reads:

JOHN NEWTON
CLERK
ONCE AN INFIDEL AND LIBERTINE
A SERVANT OF SLAVES IN AFRICA
WAS
BY THE RICH MERCY OF OUR LORD AND SAVICUR
JESUS CHRIST
PRESERVED, RESTORED, PARDONED,
AND APPOINTED TO PREACH THE FAITH
HE HAD LONG LABORED TO DESTROY.

Newton said at 32: "My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things, that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Saviour." —L.C.
(Information from "The Gospel in Hymns" by Albert Bailey)

COMMUNION NOTICE

The Salida Congregation have agreed, the Lord willing, to hold our spring Love Feast on April 4 and 5 of this year. A hearty invitation and welcome is extended to all the brethren and sisters and friends to attend.

—D.F.W.

God Himself judges our thankfulness by the harmony between our outward actions and our innermost thoughts.

—Guy Hootman

A WORD OF WARNING

by John Bloore

I want, in love and faithfulness, to pass a word of admonition to our young people in reference to practices which have come to my notice; and which, there is cause to fear, are more widespread than may appear. For the things of which I am going to speak mean the undermining of our testimony to Christ, and the destruction of practical Christian life by conformity to the world.

Perhaps some will ask, What is the world? What is worldliness? The term "world" is of frequent occurrence in Scripture, and has various meanings. I will speak of it in one connection only. It is applied to that to which we are not to be conformed (Romans 12:2); to that with which we are not to be friends, for if we are, we constitute ourselves "enemies of God". (James 4:4) It is that which is not of the Father, that from which His children should be separate. (1 John 2:16) It is that evil course of things from which God's people are, by the crucifixion of Christ, separated and delivered. (Galatians 1:4) It is that which knows not the Father—it crucified His Son, our Saviour, and is ruled over by Satan, its god and prince.

What then is the world? It is the vast system grown up with man away from God. Since man was driven out of the place in which God had set him in innocence, he is under the influence of Satan. The world, then, is man in disobedience and departure from God. When the Son of God came here in mercy to man, the world would not have Him—it crucified Him.

And when we look at the principles and motives of the world, they are, as Scripture says, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Do not pleasure, gain, vanity, ambition govern people away from God? This is "the world." It is not subject to God nor wills to obey Him; on the contrary, it seeks its own objects—self-exaltation, power, pleasure, gain; it does not love Christ; it is

blinded and enslaved by Satan who governs its followers by these selfish motives.

Worldliness does not consist solely of indulgence in certain things, or going to certain places; it is also the view taken of life according to which a certain course is pursued; it is a state of mind marked by love of this present world. If those so minded are our friends and companions, not merely casual acquaintances, you will find it hard, perhaps impossible to resist indulgence with the world in things contrary to God. You will find it almost impossible not to be found in places of worldly character, and so compromise your Christian testimony; such companionship cannot fail to develop worldly-mindedness. If the mind formed in us is the mind of Christ, which can alone be through prayerful reading and meditation of the Word, examining our conduct and judging ourselves before God—then we are kept from the snares which Satan lays before us.

I want to mention two or three things particularly, because they have ensnared young believers, and are still doing so. They corrupt, defile, and weaken the Christian; they dishonor the Lord's name and destroy Christian testimony.

The moving picture peril. Moving pictures are sometimes used for some things that are good, but mostly for the presentation of what is evil. They have a demoralizing influence upon the spectator because of the sort of life they portray. The pleasure-loving Christ-rejecting world has gone mad for these places of amusement. Is it not usually what gratifies the lust of the flesh, the passions of an evil nature, that draws the crowd who desire to see on the screen what men and women do under cover of darkness? How can a Christian occupy a seat in these places and have a good conscience? Do such things and their atmosphere nourish Christian life, or stimulate Christian feelings? Every honest conscience will say, no! Can Christ and Belial join hands, or light and darkness co-mingle?

The dancing peril. Dancing has invaded school-life

in an amazing manner. School functions can scarcely be closed now without a dance. The modern forms indulged in are especially suggestive of evil; by undue familiarity the way is open for improper conduct—all covered by the supposed respectability of the ball-room or parlor. A clergy^{man} recently wrote, "It is unquestionably true that those who come to love the dance find themselves in the way of a perilous drift. There is a lure in the dance, a most subtle influence to evil. Moreover, the modern dance wields a peculiar fascination over old as well as young."

Should a Christian dance the night away with worldlings who consult only their own desires? Should he be found where the Lord would have to snatch him from the arms of the ungodly who will share the judgment of a godless world? If the idol-temple, with its dancing, feasting, and revelries, was no place for the Christian of Paul's day, neither are the pleasure-temples of this day, be they called ball-room, theatre, music hall, picture palace, or even "my friend's" parlor in the house of the worldling. Let but your conversation be of the wonderful things of God, of Christ, of eternity, will you prove acceptable company in any of them? If Christ and the holy things of God are to our hearts what our lips say they are, none of those places would welcome us.

The dress peril. A clergyman of the Church of England said to me the other day, as we stood talking on the street of a large city, "If only our young women would realize that much of the loose morality of today is due to the style of dress adopted!" In the Catholic Cathedral of New Orleans, the officiating priest refused to perform a marriage ceremony because of the bride's attire. The city streets are full of such examples. Beware of the world's fashion, young Christian. Read what Scripture says as to this in I Tim. 2:9, 10 and I Pet. 3:3.

Some injunctions of the Word. "We should no longer live the rest of our time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." (I Pet. 4:2)

"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the

name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." (Col. 3:17)

"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." (Col. 3:23)

"Flee also youthful lusts." (II Tim. 2:22)

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (I Tim. 5:22)

"Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (I Cor. 10:31)

"Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." (I Pet. 2:11)

"The grace of God teaches us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." (Titus 2:12)

Read prayerfully these verses:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (II Cor. 6:15 and 7:1)

Where will our path be found if obedient to these words, and many other admonitions of God's Word? May the Lord enable us all to make straight paths for our feet and escape the perils which the flesh and Satan beset us with. Shall we not take up our cross daily and follow our precious Saviour? How otherwise can we be His disciples? To be a Christian is not a matter of mere profession; but the life is to show the

reality of what the lips speak.

I close with earnest desire that those who have already been caught in the swirl of this world may be delivered, and that this little talk together may be used to safeguard others. May it be laid upon our hearts as a special subject of prayer in all our Young Believers' meetings.

—Selected

"THANK YOU" FIRST

by Ruth Van Gorder

When you pause to talk with Jesus
 With petitions all rehearsed,
 Why not let them wait a moment,
 Why not say your "Thank you" first?
 Why not praise Him for your blessings?
 They are not so few or small
 As you think, and you may even
 Find you haven't after all
 Got so very much to ask for
 Weighed against earth's misery.
 You may wish to stretch to others
 Pleadings you had labeled "me".
 You may substitute for "Give me,"
 "Make me," "Use me," "Help me grow."
 You may cry, "My hands are full, Lord,
 In my heart Thy graces sow."
 You may find your spirit lightened
 Of the whines and woes you've nursed
 And your prayer time made more blessed
 Just by saying "Thank you" first.

—Selected by Martha Baker

BAPTISM

Sunday, January 19, 1964 was another occasion of great rejoicing for the members of the Salida congregation, when our dear young brother, Alvin Wagner, was united to the Church by a confession of faith and holy baptism. —D.F.W.

Historical

ADDITIONS TO THE SIMPLE DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE SECOND CENTURY

The Christian system, as it was hitherto taught, preserved its native and beautiful simplicity, and was comprehended in a small number of articles. The public teachers inculcated no other doctrines, than those that are contained in what is commonly called the "Apostles' Creed"; and, in the method of illustrating them, all vain subtilties, all mysterious researches, everything that was beyond the reach of common capacities, were carefully avoided. This will by no means appear surprising to those who consider, that, at this time, there was not the least controversy about those capital doctrines of Christianity, which were afterward so keenly debated in the church; and who reflect, that the bishops of these primitive times were, for the most part, plain and illiterate men, remarkable rather for their piety and zeal, than for their learning and eloquence.

This venerable simplicity was not, indeed, of a long duration; its beauty was gradually effaced by the laborious efforts of human learning, and the dark subtilties of imaginary science. Acute researches were employed upon several religious subjects, concerning which ingenious decisions were pronounced; and, what was worst of all, several tenets of a chimerical philosophy were imprudently incorporated into the Christian system. This disadvantageous change, this unhappy alteration of the primitive simplicity of the Christian religion, was chiefly owing to two reasons; the one drawn from pride, and the other from a sort of necessity. The former was the eagerness of certain learned men, to bring about a union between the doctrines of Christianity and the opinions of the philosophers; for they thought it a very fine accomplishment, to be able to express the precepts of Christ in the language of "philosophers", "civilians", and "rabbins". The other

reason that contributed to alter the simplicity of the Christian religion, was, the necessity of having recourse to logical definitions and nice distinctions, in order to confound the sophistical arguments which the infedel and the heretic employed, the one to overrun the Christian system, and the other to corrupt it. These philosophical arms, in the hands of the judicious and wise, were both honourable and useful to religion; but when they came to be handled by every ignorant and self sufficient meddler, as was afterward the case, they produced nothing but perplexity and confusion, under which genuine Christianity almost disappeared.

Many examples might be alleged, which verify the observations we have now been making; and, if the reader is desirous of a striking one, he has only to take a view of the doctrines which began to be taught in this century, concerning the state of the soul after the dissolution of the body. Jesus and his disciples had simply declared, that the souls of good men were; at their departure from their bodies, to be received into heaven, while those of the wicked were to be sent to hell; and this was sufficient for the first disciples of Christ to know, as they had more piety than curiosity, and were satisfied with the knowledge of this solemn fact, without any inclination to penetrate its manner, or to pry into its secret reasons. But this plain doctrine was soon disguised, when platonism began to infect Christianity. Plato had taught, that the souls of heroes, of illustrious men, and eminent philosophers alone, ascended, after death, into the mansions of light and felicity; while those of the generality, weighed down by their lusts and passions, sunk into the infernal regions, from whence they were not permitted to emerge, before they were purified from their turpitude and corruption. This doctrine was siezed with avidity by the platonic Christians, and applied as a commentary upon that of Jesus. Hence a notion prevailed, that the martyrs only entered upon a state of happiness immediately after death, and that, for the rest, a certain obscure region was assigned,

in which they were to be imprisoned until the second coming of Christ, or, at least, until they were purified from their various pollutions. This doctrine, enlarged and improved upon by the irregular fancies of injudicious men, became a source of innumerable errors, vain ceremonies, and monstrous superstitions.

But, however the doctrines of the gospel may have been abused by the commentaries and interpretations of different sects, yet all were unanimous in regarding with veneration the holy scriptures, as the great rule of faith and manners; and hence that laudable and pious zeal of adapting them to general use. We have mentioned already the translations that were made of them into different languages, and it will not be improper to say something here concerning those who employed their useful labours in explaining and interpreting them. Pantaenus, the head of the Alexandrian school, was probably the first, who enriched the church with a version of the sacred writings, which has been lost among the ruins of time. The same fate attended the commentary of Clemens the Alexandrian, upon the canonical epistles; and also another celebrated work of the same author, in which he is said to have explained, in a compendious (concise) manner, almost all the sacred writings. The "Harmony of the Evangelists", composed by Tatian, is yet extant. But the "Exposition of the Revelations", by Justin Martyr, and the "Four Gospels" by Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, together with several illustrations of the Mosaic history of the creation, by other ancient writers, are all lost.

The loss of these ancient productions is the less to be regretted, as we know, with certainty, their vast inferiority to the expositions of the holy scriptures that appeared in succeeding times. Among the persons already mentioned, there was none who deserved the name of an eminent and judicious interpreter of the sacred text. They all attributed a double sense to the words of scripture; the one obvious and literal, the other hidden and mysterious, which lay concealed, as it were, under the veil of the outward letter. The former they treated with the utmost neglect, and turn-

ed the whole force of their genius and application to unfold the latter; or, in other words, they were more studious to darken the holy scriptures with their idle fictions, than to investigate their true and natural sense. Some of them also forced the expressions of sacred writ out of their obvious meaning, in order to apply them to the support of their philosophical systems; of which dangerous and pernicious attempts, Clements of Alexandria is said to have given the first example. With respect to the expositors of the Old Testament in this century, we shall only make this general remark, that their excessive veneration for the Alexandrian version, commonly called the Septuagint, which they regarded almost as of divine authority, confined their views, fettered, as it were, their critical spirit, and hindered them from producing any thing excellent in the way of sacred criticism or interpretation.

—Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History

THE GOD-PLANNED LIFE

Why do I drift on a storm-tossed sea,
With neither compass, nor star, nor chart,
When, as I drift, God's own plan for me
Waits at the door of my slow-trusting heart?

Down from the heavens it drops like a scroll,
Each day a bit will the Master unroll;
Each day a mite of the veil will He lift.
Why do I falter? Why wander, and drift?

Drifting, while God's at the helm to steer;
Groping, when God lays the course, so clear;
Swerving, when straight into port I might sail;
Wrecking, when Heaven lies just within hail!

Help me, O Lord, in Thy plan to believe;
Help me, my fragment each day to receive.
Oh that my will may with Thine have no strife!
Since God-yielded wills find the God-planned life.

—Selected by Alma Garber

CHILDREN'S PAGE

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Jesus had chosen twelve helpers and there was much he wanted to tell them. Jesus took his helpers up into a mountain. Here he could talk to them about God. There were others who knew Jesus was going up the mountain. Many people left their homes and brought their children up to be with Jesus. Jesus looked at the crowd on the hillside. He loved every one of them. He talked to them as if they were one big family. Children living today are members of that big family.

"Do not worry about where you will get food to eat and clothes to wear. God loves you. He is your Heavenly Father. He knows that you need these things," said Jesus. "If your son asks you for bread, do you give him a stone? God is your Heavenly Father. Do you not think He will give you what you need? He loves you. He feeds the birds. He clothes the flowers of the fields in rich colors. Are you not much more important than these to God?"

It is good to think of God as our Heavenly Father, taking care of us. When we know how God loves us then our hearts will be filled with love for Him. We will love God so much that we will want to think of Him at all times. When we put God first in our lives and believe in Him we can be sure that He will take care of us because of His great love for us.

Jesus says, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these other things shall be added unto you. You will have clothes to wear, food to eat and a safe place to stay. My God shall provide all your needs, according to His riches in Heaven."

We should talk to God as we would to our Father. Jesus tells us to ask and it will be given to us, seek and we shall find.

How we should love God and praise Him for the beautiful Sermon on the Mount.

—R.S.

BIBLE CHARACTERS

JAMES

James, the author of the Epistle of James, was one of Jesus' brethren. He evidently did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God until after the resurrection. He later became the chief leader of the Church at Jerusalem, where he served about thirty years.

When Paul came to Jerusalem the first time, after he had been in Arabia, he said, "I abode with Peter fifteen days, but saw none of the other Apostles except James, the Lord's brother." (Gal. 1:18-19)

James was the one who came up with the answer to the question of Acts 15 concerning the Gentiles keeping the Law.

He was considered a very holy man and was known as "James The Just" by his countrymen. While he approved of Paul's work among the Gentiles, his chief concern was to turn his own people, the Jews, to Christianity.

It is in this epistle that we are given the ordinance of anointing the sick, and the good instructions and comfort given along with it.

James must have been a very practical man, as well as deeply spiritual, for his writings are so plain and unmistakable as to their meaning.

His epistle was likely written about 60 A.D., near the close of his life. James was martyred for his faith in Jesus, after the High Priest, Ananus, and the Scribes and Pharisees commanded him to proclaim from one of the galleries of the temple, that Jesus was not the Messiah. He refused to do so but instead confessed that Jesus was the Son of God and Judge of the world. As his enemies hurled him to the ground and stoned him, he cried out as Jesus and Stephen both had done before him, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

— Joseph L. Cover
Sonora, California

THE PILGRIM

VOL.11

MARCH, 1964

NO. 3

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

CHRIST IS RISEN!

Silently the gleams of daydawn
Swept the gloom of night away,
Penetrating e'en the shadows
Round the tomb where Jesus lay.

But the silence of the morning
Lingered not around the tomb,
When the sleeper woke a victor
Over death's encircling gloom;

For the message of the angel,
"He is risen! Go and tell,"
Echoing through the lonely garden,
Like a benediction fell.

Christ is risen! Go proclaim it;
Millions yet have never heard;
Break the silence which enshrouds them,
With the life-infusing word;

Tell them of the risen Savior,
Through His triumph, that they, too,
May awake to life immortal
In the world of glories new.

Till the gleams of that bright dawning
Sweep the night of earth away,
Till the shadows on its bosom
Turn to one glad Easter day.

Selected

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published monthly by Daniel F. Wolf in the interests of the members of The Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$1.50 per year. Sample copies sent free on request. Address: THE PILGRIM, Rt. 3, Box 1378, Modesto, Calif.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave is the most unusual event that ever took place in the history of the world.

We live in a world of miracles happening continually around us; but because of these repeated acts of God's power, they have become commonplace through lack of faith until many appear as common evidences of nature that naturally evolve. People take for granted things they cannot explain.

Most mysterious indeed are the accounts in the Bible of creation of the heavens and the earth, the conditioning of this earth for all forms of life visible and invisible to continue on the constant cycle of life forms with the power of reproduction carried on continuing from the past to the present time, although marked along the way by the extinction of some forms of life that have failed to carry on.

Today we desire to refresh our minds to consider the unusual event and power of the resurrection that many in our time deny.

According to the Bible, some few persons had been brought to life before the time of Christ, after being dead. This wonderful power of God manifested in Elijah and Elisha in the deaths of the two little boys. These holy men prayed to God that their souls would come back again to their bodies, and it was so. Also, the man cast hastily into the grave of Elisha came to life. (II Kings 13:21) In each of these three brought to life, the souls entered the natural body again.

Jesus Christ demonstrated His power over death to raise from the dead in three stages or conditions:

1. The daughter of Jairus, ruler of a synagogue. Jairus pleads with Jesus to heal her, being at the point of death. While the father was away beholding the mighty works of Jesus, his daughter died, and word

of the sad event came to him. Jesus said unto him, "Be not afraid, only believe." They came to the house; the little maid laid in her bed as asleep. Jesus called her to life and she arose. (Mark 5:21-23,41,42)

2. In the coffin being borne along to the cemetery by the little town of Nain; the poor widow's only son going to the tomb. Jesus comforted the mother saying, "Weep not," touched the bier, the procession stopped, and Jesus said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." (Luke 7:11)

3. In the grave four days lay Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha. In this instance, the power of Jesus was shown to reach even to the grave, proving the words He had just uttered: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me shall never die. Believeth thou this?"

The power of Jesus reached greater heights than this, for He says, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I recieved of my Father." (John 10:17,18)

So we see in Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, (I Timothy 3:10) the natural part of Him subject to His eternal power and Godhead, (Romans 1:20) Who while born on earth to die, also was born to "abolish death and bring life and immortality to light through the Gospel." (II Timothy 1:10)

Again we say, The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave is the most unusual event that took place in the history of the world.

The follow-up of this great event affects us all and fulfills the words of Jesus Who said, "Because I live, ye shall live also," (John 14:19) comforting down through the ages all who faithfully follow Jesus according to His word of life.

The words of Jesus will come to pass in the mighty demonstration of His power of the first and second resurrections. He says, "Marvel not at this; for the

hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28,29) Death is swallowed up in victory. (I Cor. 15:54) And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:14,15)

And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever. The follow-up of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave is "eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." (Hebrews 5:9) May we live forever through Jesus Christ our Lord!

—J.I.Cover

Sonora, California

THE DIVINE NATURE

In II Peter 1:4 we read, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: That by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." The word "wherefore" would indicate "for which reasons" or "for certain reasons". And in the preceeding verse of this chapter these reasons are definitely stated as follows: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Upon these precious promises the apostle Peter opens to us the door to the divine nature.

There are various forms of nature. The word is defined as "The charactor, constitution, or essential traits of a person, thing, or class." But the nature referred to above is DIVINE, far removed from the fleshly or carnal nature, and so very far removed from their respective destinies and final rewards. Who can measure or fully comprehend the magnitude of the eternal glory to the life lived in possession of the "divine

nature"? This divine nature is fully exemplified in the condescension, holy life, death, and resurrection of our blessed Jesus. His nature is so foreign and diverse from the nature in which we are born and grow up, untill through the instrumentality of the second birth, through faith, repentance, and baptism which Jesus ordained, we become new creatures, dead to sin and the carnal mind. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace: spiritual death, and spiritual life.

Jesus Himself exemplified the way of the divine nature when He was baptized by John in the river Jordan, upon which the Holy Spirit descended upon Him. At His final trial, the carnal and the divine natures were vividly demonstrated when Peter used the sword to sever the ear of the servant of the high priest, and Jesus immediately healed it back. Here is the great dividing line between the carnal sword and the spiritual sword, or divine and carnal nature. The Holy Spirit within the human breast is the only source and fountain from which will spring the divine nature.

We have a beautiful illustration of the divine nature and its opponent in Luke, chapter 7 where Jesus was censured by the self-righteous, conceited Pharisee for having deep compassion on the woman sinner who kissed His feet, washed them with her tears, and anointed them with the precious ointment. Yes, the lofty, proud Pharisee was blind to divine nature of the merciful Jesus. The apostle Paul found a lack of the divine nature among the Corinthian brethren. (I Cor. 3:3) "For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men?" (unconverted men)

Dear ones, let us pray earnestly that we may have the "Divine nature", the mind of Christ.

—David A. Skiles

Rossville, Indiana

Search thy friend for his virtues, thyself for thy faults.

WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY CRUCIFIED MY LORD?

This is the title of a very touching, reverent, Negro spiritual. The question searches our hearts, not in its literal meaning, but in the spirit of it. We can, even now, visit the scene of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ through the recorded word. It is at this place that we see ourselves and the whole world in proper perspective. Let us now visit the scene of our Lord's suffering outside the gate of Jerusalem. Let us take a journey to the hill of Golgotha—the place of a skull.

It is still quite early morning, and the hill is quiet and peaceful. But in the city nearby, there has been a great commotion since late last night when the mob hired by the priests brought in Jesus and accused Him of blasphemy. Jesus was known by many in this turbulent city. A vast crowd had hailed Him as their King only a few days before. And one thing was certain; no one knew anything evil about Him. The priests, of course, were envious, and it was for this cause that they wanted Him put out of the way. They had quite a search to find even a false witness to accuse Him. And when they did find some, their witnesses did not agree. But on examination, Jesus had admitted that He was the Son of God. From His words of truth, the Sanhedrin sentenced Him to death on the charge of blasphemy. In other times, it would have been a death by stoning. But now the Romans were in power, and the Jews could put no man to death. The Roman execution was the cruelist known: crucifixion! Jesus Himself had told His disciples that He would be "lifted up" or crucified.

As we pause at Golgotha, we hear shouts in the distance and see the angry mob approaching. A Cyrenian is carrying the cross with Jesus bound and walking behind wearing a crown of thorns. The company is divided into two parts. The largest is the mob incited by the priests to a frenzy of lust for blood. The priests were there, too, to make sure of this vile deed. The

other group is a small one consisting of a few women and men weeping and following as close to Jesus as they dare. This is the group we must join if we remain here. The activities at this place demand that we make a choice. We must either be scoffers and accusers, or we must bow and weep with these faithful few.

On reaching the place, the Roman soldiers take over roughly with the air of the experienced. They strip the clothes from the Lord and lay Him on the cross. Then huge, rough spikes are driven through His hands and feet. The cross is raised and dropped into the hole that supports it to the cry of Jesus, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Two thieves were also crucified, one on each side of Jesus, fulfilling the scripture "And he was numbered with the transgressors." (Isaiah 53:12) The soldiers also fulfilled prophecy when they cast lots for Jesus' garments. (Psalms 22:18)

Jesus' physical suffering had begun when He was beaten by Pilate and tormented by the soldiers. There they put on His crown of thorns, mocked Him, smote Him, and spit on Him. But now begins His suffering of death which Jesus bore for the sins of the world. His suffering was made worse by the taunts of those that passed by and the priests, scribes and elders. "He saved others; himself he cannot save!" "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." "He trusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him!" Jesus was concerned only for the little group who bowed at the foot of His cross. He looks down and fastens His eyes on His mother. "Woman behold thy son!" and to John, the loving disciple standing with her, "Behold thy mother!" And John cared for Mary from that time.

At first the thieves taunted Jesus with the crowd to deliver Himself and them. But one of them realized as time passed, that Jesus was indeed the Son of God. He pleaded from his cross, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Jesus' answer sent the dying man to his death in peace. "Verily I say to thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Suddenly, at high noon, after Jesus had been on the

cross for three hours, the sun becomes dark! Men that scoffed begin to fear and leave the scene. For three hours the sun was dark, Then at the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He no doubt realized that this was the hour for which He had come into the world. And yet what terrible suffering and anguish of soul He endured at this time when Jesus the Redeemer must make the supreme sacrifice for sin—alone.

By now, Jesus knew all things were accomplished that the scriptures had told of Him. His words "I thirst" brought vinegar on a sponge. When He had received this, He cried out, "It is finished! Father into thy hands I commend my spirit." And He bowed His head and died.

Suddenly the earth began to shake and the rocks break with terrible noise. Graves were opened. The temple veil was rent from top to bottom. Such was the demonstration that even the Roman centurion confessed, "Truly this was the Son of God."

Let us also contemplate this scene and this demonstration and confess that Jesus is the Son of God. We see proven at this place, not only His deity, but also His infinite love in dying for a lost world. By this death the Father was satisfied. The price of sin is paid. Guilty souls can now bow here at the cross to realize the cleansing of Jesus' blood. This is the "fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" spoken of in Zechariah 13:1. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Calvary's mournful mountain climb;

There adoring at His feet,

Mark that miracle of time,

God's own sacrifice complete.

"It is finished!" hear Him cry;

Learn of Jesus Christ to die.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

—L.C.

IN THE MORNING

In the morning sunshine breaking,
When the saints to glory rise,
When the cemeteries shaking,
Glory flooding all the skies.

When the ransomed wake from slumber,
Clothed in garments fair and white,
Join in an increasing number,
Children of eternal light.

When the faithful ones believing,
Those who watched and waited long,
Changed to glory, and receiving
Joy to mingle with the throng.

All together of all ages
Rise to meet their King of Kings;
All found written on life's pages,
Heaven with joyful praises rings.

Keep on, watch for His appearing,
Though it be in darkest night,
Lights of starry heavens cheering,
Keep on trying for the right.

Faithful watch will be rewarding;
Way of lonely traveler ends,
When the angels skyway guarding,
And our upward journey tends.

—J.I.Cover

COMMUNION NOTICE

The Salida Congregation have agreed, the Lord willing, to hold our spring Love Feast on April 4 and 5 of this year. A hearty invitation and welcome is extended to all the brethren and sisters and friends to attend.

—D.F.W.

HYMN STUDY

THE NINETY AND NINE

There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold;
But one was out on the hills away,
Far off from the gates of gold.
 Away on the mountains wild and bare,
 Away from the tender Shepherd's care
Lord, Thou hast here Thy ninety and nine.
Are they not enough for Thee?
But the Shepherd made answer,
 "This of mine has wandered away from me;
 And although the road be rough and steep,
 I go to the desert to find my sheep."
But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed,
Nor how dark was the night the Lord passed through,
Ere He found His sheep that was lost.
 Far out in the desert He heard a cry.
 'Twas sick and helpless and ready to die.
Lord, whence are those blood drops all the way
That mark out the mountain's track?
They were shed for one who had gone astray,
Ere the Shepherd could bring him back.
 Lord, whence are Thy hands so rent and torn?
 They're pierced tonight by many a thorn.
But all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
And up from the rocky steep,
There arose a cry to the gate of heaven,
 "Rejoice! I have found my sheep."
 And the angels echoed around the Throne,
 "Rejoice! for the Lord brings back His own."

These beautiful lines were composed by Mrs. Elizabeth Cecilia Clephane in the year of 1868 at Melrose, Scotland. Mrs. Clephane was born in Edinburgh on June 10, 1830 and died February 19, 1869.

After the death of Mrs. Clephane, this poem was pub-

lished in the "Christian Age" where it was read by Mr. Sankey who was with the evangelist, D.L.Moody. Mr. Sankey felt that the poem might be useful later on, so he cut it out to keep.

In one of Moody's big meetings in Edinburgh at an impressive moment, Mr. Moody said to Sankey in private, "Sing something." Mr. Sankey realized that the words of the little poem were just right for the occasion, so sitting down to the organ with a silent prayer for divine help, he began to play and sing a new melody with the words. Thus he composed the beautiful tune we now know so well, before the eyes and ears of over 1000 people.

Mrs. Clephane undoubtedly was inspired to write this hymn from the words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 18:12-14. "How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? and if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." Also see Luke 15:4-7.

These words portray to us the tender loving care that the Lord has for each soul and of the wondrous sacrifice and effort He made to rescue and save the lost and straying sinner.

We get a little realization of the value that God places on the human soul from the words of Jesus in Luke 15:7. "I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

—Joseph L. Cover

Sonora, California

Make thou that holy Guide thine own,
And, following where He leads the way,
The known shall lapse in the unknown
As twilight into day.

—John Greenleaf Whittier

Sel. by Guy Hootman

Historical

ORIGIN'S ALLEGORICAL AND SPECULATIVE INTERPRETATION OF THE SCRIPTURES

The principal doctrines of Christianity were now explained to the people in their native purity and simplicity, without any mixture of abstract reasonings or subtile inventions; nor were the feeble minds of the multitude loaded with a great variety of precepts. But the christian doctors, who had applied themselves to the study of letters and philosophy, soon abandoned the frequented paths, and struck out into the devious wilds of fancy. The Egyptians distinguished themselves in this new method of explaining the truth. They looked upon it as a noble and a glorious task to bring the doctrines of celestial wisdom into a certain subjection to the precepts of their philosophy, and to make deep and profound researches into the intimate and hidden nature of those truths which the divine Saviour had delivered to his disciples. Origen was at the head of this speculative tribe. This great man, enchanted by the charms of the platonic philosophy, set it up as the test of all religion; and imagined, that the reasons of each doctrine were to be found in that favourite philosophy, and their nature and extent to be determined by it. It must be confessed, that he handled this matter with modesty and with caution; but he still gave an example to his disciples, the abuse of which could not fail to be pernicious, and under the authority of which they would naturally indulge themselves without restraint in every wanton fancy. And so, indeed, the case was; for the disciples of Origen, breaking forth from the limits fixed by their master, interpreted, in the most licentious manner, the divine truths of religion according to the tenor of the platonic philosophy. From these teachers the philosophical, or scholastic theology, as it is called, derives its origin; and proceeding hence, passed through various forms and modifications according to the genius, turn, and erudition of

those who embraced it.

The same principles gave rise to another species of theology, which was called mystic. And what must seem at first sight surprising here is, that this mystic theology, though formed at the same time, and derived from the same source with the scholastic, yet had a natural tendency to overturn and destroy it. The authors of this mystic science are not known; but the principles from whence it sprung are manifest. Its first promoters proceeded from that known doctrine of the platonic school, which also was adopted by Origen and his disciples, that the divine nature was diffused through all human souls; or, in other words that the faculty of reason, from which proceeds the health and vigour of the mind, was an emanation from God into the human soul. and comprehended in it the principles and elements of all truth, human and divine. They denied that men could, by labour or study, excite this celestial flame in their breasts; and therefore, they disapproved highly of the attempts of those who, by definitions, abstract theorems, and profound speculations, endeavoured to form distinct notions of truth, and to discover its hidden nature. On the contrary, they maintained, that silence, tranquillity, repose, and solitude, accompanied with such acts of mortification as might tend to extenuate and exhaust the body, were the means by which the hidden and internal word was excited to produce its latent virtues, and to instruct men in the knowledge of divine things. For thus they reasoned; "they who behold with a noble contempt all human affairs, who turn away their eyes from terrestrial vanities, and shut all the avenues of the outward senses against the contagious influences of a material world, must necessarily return to God when the spirit is thus disengaged from the impediments that prevented that happy union. And in this blessed frame, they not only enjoy inexpressible raptures from their communion with the Supreme Being, but also are invested with the inestimable privilege of contemplating truth undisguised and uncorrupted in its native purity, while others behold it in a vitiated and delusive form."

This method of reasoning produced strange effects, and drove many into caves and deserts, where they macerated their bodies with hunger and thirst, and submitted to all the miseries of the severest discipline that a gloomy imagination could prescribe. And, it is not improbable that Paul, the first hermit, was rather engaged by this fanatical system, than by the persecution under Decius, to fly into the most solitary deserts of Thebais, where he led, during the space of ninety years, a life more worthy of a savage animal than of a rational being. It is, however, to be observed, that though Paul is placed at the head of the order of hermits, yet that unsociable manner of life was very common in Egypt, Syria, India, and Mesopotamia, not only long before his time, but even before the coming of Christ. And it is still practised among the Mahometans, as well as the Christians, in those arid and burning climates. For the glowing atmosphere that surrounds these countries is a natural cause of that love of solitude and repose, of that indolent and melancholy disposition, that are remarkably common among their languid inhabitants. —Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History

THREE GATES

If you are tempted to reveal
A tale someone to you has told
About another, make it pass
Before you speak, three gates of gold:
Three narrow gates: First, "Is it true?"
Then, "Is it needful?" In your mind
Give truthful answer, and the next
Is last and narrowest, "Is it kind?"
And if to reach your lips at last
It passes through these gateways three,
Then you may tell, nor fear
What the result of speech may be.

Selected by
Orpha Wagner

CHILDREN'S PAGE

It was the middle of the day when the sun shines brightest. But this day, there was something wrong. The sky was blacker than in the middle of the night. The earth began to shake and tremble. Jesus was dying on the cross, and all heaven was sorrowing. In fierce anguish He suffered, but a veil of darkness came down, covering Him so that none might see His awful agony.

Jesus' soul was sorrowing, for He bore the sins of the people of the world. Drop by drop, His blood spilled from the cross where He hung. They had pierced His hands and His feet with nails to hang Him on the awful cross of pain. They had crowned Him with a crown of thorns. And He suffered willingly for all who believe in Him. He loved others more than He did Himself. His love was so great that He gave His life for all people.

It was midafternoon. Three terrible hours of agony had slowly passed by. They were hours of terrifying silence.

The silence was broken! There was a great cry!

Those who were near the cross heard the last words that Jesus said, triumphantly: "It is finished!" His bitter suffering was over. He had given His life for His loved ones. The great work of salvation was now, at last, completed.

Joseph and Nicodemus placed the body of Jesus in a new tomb which had been hewn out of a big rock. Through the grey shadows of the dawn, the dim outline of a great stone could be seen. It was placed before the tomb.

Jesus had told His enemies, "In three days I shall rise again." And they were frightened! Every precaution was taken so Jesus could not leave the tomb. Suddenly the earth trembled. A mighty angel descended from heaven and rolled back the stone from the tomb and sat upon it. The guards fell to the ground as if they were dead.

Jesus came forth from the tomb. He had risen from the dead! All the power of men on earth could not prevail against Him!

-R.S.

BIBLE CHARACTERS

NAAMAN

Naaman was a great and powerful man. He had won his fame in battle as captain of the Syrian army. However, Naaman was also a leper. Now it happened that in Naaman's household there was a maid who had been captured in Israel. She remembered the prophet Elisha in Samaria told her mistress that he could heal Naaman.

Thus, Naaman went to Israel to be healed. He took with him gold, silver, and costly garments as presents to the man who should heal him. Naturally, as a man of rank, he expected to be received with pomp and ceremony. He pictured Elisha following a mysterious ritual and calling on God to heal him. Consequently, when he did not even see Elisha but was told by a messenger to bathe in the Jordan River seven times, he was angered and determined to go home. Only when his servants reasoned with him was he finally persuaded to follow Elisha's instructions. Immediately, after dipping himself seven times in the river, he was cleansed.

The important lesson illustrated here is one of pride and submission to God's will. It was certainly a blow to Naaman to be stricken with leprosy. However, his pride was hurt when he was treated as a common person and not allowed to even see the prophet. Finally, it was not the waters of Jordan which cleansed Naaman, but the humbling act of submitting to the will of God and trusting in His power. This lesson is applicable to our every day lives and reminds us that:

Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. (Proverbs 16:18)

Had Naaman refused to listen to Elisha, his pride would have been the thing which prevented him from being cleansed. Let us remember that if we have been highly favored or richly endowed it is not by our own merits but by the grace of God.

--Glen Shirk

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THE PILGRIM

VOL. 11

APRIL, 1964

NO. 4

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

I MET THE MASTER

I had walked Life's way with an easy tread;
And followed where comforts and pleasures led,
Until one day in a quiet place
I met the Master face to face.

With station and rank and wealth for my goal,
Much thought for my body but none for my soul,
I had entered to win in Life's mad race,
When I met the Master face to face.

I met Him and knew Him and blushed to see
That His eyes full of sorrow were fixed on me;
And I faltered and fell at His feet that day,
While my castles melted and vanished away.

Melted and vanished, and in their place
Naught else did I see but the Master's face.
And I cried aloud, "Oh, make me meet
To follow the steps of Thy wounded feet."

My thought is now for the souls of men;
I have lost my life to find it again,
E'er since one day in a quiet place
I met the Master face to face.

Selected by
Alma Garber

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published monthly by Daniel F. Wolf in the interests of the members of The Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$1.50 per year. Sample copies sent free on request. Address: THE PILGRIM, Rt. 3, Box 1378, Modesto, Calif.

I. COME UNTO ME...

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30

Almost 2,000 years ago Jesus gave this invitation to mankind. All men are burdened by sin and the troubles of this life, but Jesus offers rest from these. Furthermore, this rest is not to be granted solely to a small group of people but to all men who will come to Him. Here then is the solution to all the cares and problems this world can offer. Jesus can show us the way to an inner peace or rest.

By what authority did Jesus make this promise? Jesus was and is the Son of God. He was the Messiah who had been promised to come to save Israel. In His trial before the high priest, when asked if He was the Christ, Jesus answered, "I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14:62) The fact that Jesus was the Son of God is further shown by His Resurrection. After Christ was crucified, He rose from the dead on the third day. When told of this, Thomas, one of the disciples, refused to believe it until he himself had seen Jesus and felt His wounds. Thomas, on seeing Jesus, acknowledged Him as the Lord. Jesus then said to him, "Thomas because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (John 20:29) Furthermore, Jesus was with the disciples for forty days and demonstrated by many infallible proofs that it was He. (Acts 1:3)

There was a greater purpose for Christ's death than merely proving that He was the Son of God. It was for the redemption of mankind. When Adam disobeyed God in

the Garden of Eden, he brought sin into the world and upon all mankind. At that time God told the serpent (which was Satan) that "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Genesis 3:15) This not only foretells the struggle of man against sin and Satan, but of the struggle between Christ and Satan in which Christ would triumph and redeem mankind from sin. This was accomplished when Christ was crucified and rose from the dead. In His Resurrection, Jesus triumphed over death and gave man the chance to accept Him and be saved.

II. A NEW COMMANDMENT I GIVE UNTO YOU... JOHN 13:34

One of the most basic concepts in the life of every Christian is love. Jesus, when asked what the greatest commandment was, said that "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (Matthew 22:37) Furthermore, without being asked He continued, "And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matthew 22:39-40) In John 13:34, Jesus tells us once again that we are to love each other as He has loved us. Thus, in the Christian's life, all actions should be based upon love. If we truly love one another there can be no lying, stealing, cheating, or deceiving. The world needs only to adopt love, as Christ taught us, to solve all of its problems. Truly, Jesus has given us the answer.

III. HE THAT BELIEVETH...

Man's situation is not hopeless as he has been redeemed by Jesus Christ. There are no exceptions if man desires it to be so. We are not compelled to accept this saving grace, but are given a choice. We may or may not choose to follow Him, but should we choose not to follow Him we shall have to bear the consequences. In Mark 16:6, we are told that "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Jesus has made it simple for us. We need only to believe on Him, be baptized, and follow His commandments. If we truly believe in Him and follow Him, we will no longer care for the pleasures of sin for we, as Christians, will experience greater and more lasting pleasures. Now is the time to act for tomorrow may be too late. Some day Jesus is going to come to earth again and the time of grace which He has extended to us will be over. Then those that have not accepted Christ will cry for the rocks and mountains to fall on them that they might escape the wrath of the Lord. (Revelation 5:16) However, those who have believed may look forward to the coming of Christ, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thessalonians 4:16,17)

—Glen Shirk

Berkeley, California

THREE JUDGMENT SEATS IN GOD'S GREAT

PLAN OF THE AGES

To render competent judgment in a civil court, it would seem needful that the judge have a good knowledge of the established laws of the state, so that his verdict will be based on lawful authority instead of personal feelings and emotions which could result in unfair and unrighteous judgment.

It appears that God has seen fit to place the first judgment seat into the hands of human beings, or rather His adopted or born again sons and daughters who have lived, and do now live on the earth. This is plainly proven and established. I Cor. 11:31,32: "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be condemned with the world."

From the lips of Jesus came these words: "Judge not that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge,

ye shall be judged." This shows us that the Christian's field of Judge and Judgment is narrowed down to his individual self. In this field of judgment it is also essential that we have back of us an established law by which we may judge "Righteous judgment"--not actuated by selfish motives, but by the spirit of life in Christ Jesus which has liberated us from the law of sin and death. When this judgment has been faithfully and fully executed, it will prepare us for the second seat of judgment, "The Judgment Seat of Christ", at which all, every one must appear for justification or condemnation.

It seems so clear to the writer that when we close our eyes to mortality, we open them at the judgment seat of Christ, there to receive the sure verdict: "To the right hand" or "To the left". To them on the right hand, death will now have been forever swallowed up in victory: no more death but life eternal, and their station of life forever sealed.

The third judgment seat or Great White Throne judgment is at least one thousand years beyond the judgment of Christ. Here the Revelator saw God Himself stand before whom? Not the living, but the dead shall stand to give account to the records of the books that shall be opened. This may include "The rest of the dead that lived not again untill the thousand years are finished." "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works."

What a precious opportunity, and how needful that in this first judgment that is given into our hands we judge **RIGHT**ECUS judgment so when we appear at the Judgment Seat of Christ it will be a most glorious event; being alive for evermore, and not having to wait till the White Throne judgment to find our eternal destiny.

—David A. Skiles
Rossville, Indiana

The privilege of doing good is one of the divinest in life, and it may be shared by all.

EDITORIAL...

For the body is not one member but many.

And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble are necessary...

And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

These verses from I Corinthians 12 deal with the importance of each member to the body--whether it be a natural body or the body of Christ--His Church. I recently was impressed by a statement from a member to the effect that we should endeavor to make each one feel "needed". This is a very important part of our relationship to each other because we love to be where we feel we are needed. And we do not remain long in a place where we feel we are not needed.

My first thought is on the dependence of members on each other. The relationship of the members of the Church of Jesus Christ is so close that the Church is referred to as the "body" of Christ. And each believer is a "member" of this "body" just as our natural body is made up of members. Each one is needed. The scriptures explain it, and we can feel it. Each part of the body has its function, and some parts are never even seen. But some of these are the most important parts of the body. Each part or member is important to the body, and there can be no division if the body is to function properly.

My second thought goes back to the statement I mentioned. How can we make each one realize he is so important to the body? One way is to be free with words of encouragement for deeds well done. We should express our appreciation when we receive help or encouragement from our fellow-members. And particularly, we should remind each other and especially new converts, that each one fills a place that no one else can fill.

Each one has his own tasks and responsibilities in the work of the Lord. Young people cannot do the work of the elders of the Church, but they can be faithful and active as young Christians. They can encourage other young people in a way an older person cannot. I can say the same words of encouragement that my brother can, but I cannot say them for him. His words can only be said by himself. My brother can pray for a lost soul with the same zeal as I, but his prayers cannot replace mine if I am failing in this way.

While the work of the Lord will go forward regardless of individuals, still the Lord has a place and a task for each one who would follow Him. A task does not have to be big to be worth doing and doing well. Perhaps, in our search for important work, we overlook little things the Lord has given us to do. Let us all pray that we each can be awake and sensitive to the work the Lord has for us. Let us more and more forget our own interests as individuals and work together as members of one body--the body of Christ. —L.C.

MORNING PRAYER

by Ella Syfers Schenck

Lord, in the quiet of this morning hour
I come to Thee for peace, for wisdom, power
To view the world today through love-filled eyes;
Be patient, understanding, gentle, wise;
To see beyond what seems to be, and know
Thy children as Thou knowest them; and so
Naught but the good in anyone behold;
Make deaf my ears to slander that is told;
Silence my tongue to aught that is unkind;
Let only thoughts that bless dwell in my mind.
Let me so kindly be, so full of cheer,
That all I meet may feel Thy presence near.
O clothe me in Thy beauty, this I pray,
Let me reveal Thee, Lord, through all the day.

Selected by
Martha Baker

OUR TIMES AND THE CHURCHES

by Rev. Samuel Hubditch, Gospel Visitor
December, 1865

But we must not hope for less perilous times. There is not the least sign in commerce, legislation, literature, or public taste of the advent of a spirit more favorable to religion. If the church is to recover, it will not be by the decline of her enemy's strength, but by the increase of her own. On herself the whole burden lies. He who declined to pray for his people's removal from the world, declines to make it less perilous to remain in it. He will not alter, but they must overcome the world. Nature, with the same vastness in her mountains, and hardness in her rocks, and breadth in her oceans, and violence in her storms, and force in all her laws, is more than ever subject to man, because he has become more skillful. He has discovered and asserted his superiority, and she has made loyal answer. Let the "children of light" in this also learn wisdom from "the children of this generation". Are Christians to be scared from their propriety by the spirit of fashion and wealth, and the egotism of this world--the heavenly by the earthly? Shall a royal priesthood, a holy nation, blush and cringe and skulk and compromise in a world of shams like this? The cycles through which the education of the church is extended, are purposely varied, that the spiritual life may show its independence of all accidents and circumstances. It has borne the world's frown, and is now called to show no fascination under the world's smile.

A spiritual life--which is in the will, irresistible righteousness; in the conscience, delicacy and decision; in the understanding, light; in the affections, reverence and love--is the one thing our churches want, and ours today is the high honor of consulting how to bring it them or them to it.

After much thought, I have found the simplest and safest answer to the question, "How to revive the

churches?" to be the answer to another, "How to revive myself?" . . . Our tendency to decline is shared by all our people, and the conditions of their recovery and ours are the same. If the effect of the times has been to diminish the church's appreciation of her Saviour, and increase her distance from him, her attention should be especially directed to the duty of getting nearer to him. Our relation to Christ brings with it all our privileges and powers. "He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." Near to him, we see things as they are, and feel and act as we ought. There sin appears the abominable thing that it is. There the tinsel of this life loses all of its color, and the voices that call to worldly greatness have a dull and unexciting sound. There the thousand questions of the Scripture are answered. There all doubts of personal acceptance die, and the fountains of gratitude and joy are opened. Cowardice then changes to courage, indolence to industry, law is lost in love, and duty in delight. There eternity and heaven and the great spirit-world stand open, throwing all things terrestrial into the shade. We die with Christ, and rise and sit with him in heavenly places.

—Selected by Daniel F. Wolf

HOW MORAL ROT SETS IN

Doing nothing about duty or opportunity is doing something; indecision is decision—the wrong way.

No man ever said, "I will be an ignoramus." He just looked at the books he ought to have read and said, "I will read them—some other time."

No man ever said, "I will drop all my friends." He just looked at their unanswered letters and said, "I will answer those letters—some other time."

No man ever said, "I will go to the Devil." He just said, "Moral standards? Christian principles? I will attend to them all—some other time."

But books, letters, and Christian principles have all been neglected and some day the bill will come in.

Selected from "The Sunday School Herald"

HYMN STUDY

JESUS, LOVER OF MY SOUL

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high.

Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
O receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none!
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, ah! leave me not alone;
Still support and comfort me.

All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find;
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.

Just and holy is Thy name;
I am all unrighteousness:
False and full of sin I am;
Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to pardon all my sin.
Let the healing streams abound;
Make and keep me pure within.

Thou of life the fountain art,
Freely let me take of Thee;
Spring Thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity.

This hymn, another by Charles Wesley, was written in 1739. There are several legends concerning its or-

igen. It is said that the writer was on a ship during one of his first evangelistic tours. They had been traveling through a violent storm when suddenly a bird flew to the ship and lighted right on the poet's breast. The bird was completely exhausted from battling the storm and trusted the man for shelter and rest. Another story relates that a dove flew into the window pursued by a hawk. The dove found refuge as the hawk did not dare enter. From this happening, it is said, Charles Wesley received inspiration to write this beautiful hymn of trust.

It is more likely, however, that the author was inspired to write it from some of his experiences which are recorded in his own diary. One event was a terrific storm on the Atlantic on his return trip from Georgia to England. Some excerpts from his journal tell of this dreadful experience:

"There was so prodigious a sea that it quickly washed away our sheep and half our hogs, and drowned most of our fowl... The sea streamed in at the sides so plentifully that it was as much as four men could do by continual pumping to keep her above water. I prayed for...faith in Jesus Christ, continually repeating his name, till I felt the virtue of it at last, and knew that I abode under the shadow of the Almighty... The captain finding it otherwise impossible to save her from sinking, cut down the mizzen mast. In that dreadful moment, I bless God, I found the comfort of hope; and such joy in finding I could hope, as the world could neither give nor take away..."

Hide me O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past.

"Toward morning the sea heard and obeyed the divine voice, 'Peace, be still.'"

Another incident which may have influenced this hymn was his preaching to ten condemned criminals and seeing them give their hearts to the Lord and go to the gallows in victory and peace.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found
Grace to pardon all my sin.

This hymn is said to be Charles Wesley's most famous. (Information from "The Gospel in Hymns" by Bailey) -L.C.

Historical

(For a few issues in this column we would like to publish some old writings and histories relating to the persecutions of the Christian Church in past ages. This first will be two letters written about 111 A.D. between the Roman emperor Trajan and his consul, Pliny. This writing portrays a side of the persecutions that we rarely hear mentioned. —Ed.)

PLINY'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH TRAJAN

Plinius Caecilius Secundus (62-113) reached the consulship in 100 A.D., and in the year 111 was sent by Trajan on a special mission to set in order the cities of Bithynia.

This letter shows his hesitation in dealing with the Christians. Obstinate offenders, of course, he puts to death; but what was to be done with those who renounced their offence, or had long ago given it up? Was it good policy to use indiscriminate severity? Trajan answers that convicted offenders must be punished, though they are not to be searched for, and that all suspected persons who renounce Christianity are to be set free.

PLINY TO TRAJAN

It is my custom, lord emperor, to refer to you all questions whereof I am in doubt. Who can better guide me when I am at a stand, or enlighten me if I am in ignorance? In investigations of Christians I have never taken part; hence I do not know what is the crime usually punished or investigated, or what allowances are made. So I have had no little uncertainty whether there is any distinction of age, or whether the very weakest offenders are treated exactly like the stronger; whether pardon is given to those who repent, or whether nobody who has ever been a Christian at all gains anything by having ceased to be such; whether punishment attaches to the mere name apart from secret

crimes, or to the secret crimes connected with the name. Meantime this is the course I have taken with those who were accused before me as Christians. I asked at their own lips whether they were Christians, and if they confessed, I asked them a second and third time with threats of punishment. If they kept to it, I ordered them for execution; for I held no question that whatever it was that they admitted, in any case obstinacy and unbending perversity deserve to be punished. There were others of the like insanity; but as these were Roman citizens, I noted them down to be sent to Rome. Before long, as is often the case, the mere fact that the charge was taken notice of made it commoner, and several distinct cases arose. An unsigned paper was presented, which gave the names of many. As for those who said that they neither were nor ever had been Christians, I thought it right to let them go, since they recited a prayer to the gods at my dictation, made supplication with incense and wine to your statue, which I had ordered to be brought into court for the purpose together with the images of the gods, and moreover cursed Christ—not one of which things (so it is said) those who are really Christians can be made to do. Others who were named by the informer said that they were Christians and then denied it, explaining that they had been, but had ceased to be such, some three years ago, some a good many years, and a few as many as twenty. All these too not only worshipped your statue and the images of the gods, but cursed Christ. They maintained, however, that the amount of their fault or error had been this, that it was their habit on a fixed day to assemble before daylight and sing by turns a hymn to Christ as a god; and that they bound themselves with an oath, not for any crime, but not to commit theft or robbery or adultery, not to break their word, and not to deny a deposit when demanded. After this was done, their custom was to depart, and meet together again to take food, but ordinary and harmless food; and even this (they said) they had given up doing after the issue of my edict, by which in accordance with your commands I had forbid-

den the existence of clubs. On this I considered it the more necessary to find out from two maid-servants who were called deaconesses, and that by torments, how far this was true: but I discovered nothing else than a wicked and arrogant superstition. I therefore adjourned the case and hastened to consult you. The matter seemed to me worth deliberation, especially on account of the number of those in danger; for many of all ages and every rank, and even of both sexes are brought into present or future danger. The contagion of that superstition has penetrated not the cities only, but the villages and country; yet it seems possible to stop it and set it right. At any rate it is certain enough that the almost deserted temples begin to be resorted to, that long disused ceremonies of religion are restored, and that fodder for victims finds a market, whereas buyers till now were very few. From this it may easily be supposed, what a multitude of men can be reclaimed, if there be a place of repentance.

TRAJAN TO PLINY

You have followed, my dear Secundus, the process you should have done in examining the cases of those who were accused to you as Christians, for indeed nothing can be laid down as a general law involving something like a definite rule of action. They are not to be sought out; but if they are accused and convicted, they must be punished--yet on this condition, that who-so denies himself to be a Christian, and makes the fact plain by his action, that is, by worshipping our gods, shall obtain pardon on his repentance, however suspicious his past conduct may be. Papers, however, which are presented unsigned ought not to be admitted in any charge, for they are a very bad example and unworthy of our time.

—"Selections from Early Writers"

(Children's Page continued)

Jesus began to rise up from the earth. Up, up, up He went until a cloud covered Him and His helpers could not see Him anymore. The helpers remembered that Jesus said, "I will come again." (John 14:1-6) —R.S.

CHILDREN'S PAGE

A small boy was very interested in a picture in an art store window. The picture was one of the crucifixion of Christ. A gentleman came by, stopped, and looked. The little boy, seeing his interest, said, "That's Jesus." The man made no reply, and the lad continued, "Them's Roman soldiers." And after a moment, "They killed Him."

"Where did you learn that?" asked the man.

"In church," was the reply.

The man turned and walked thoughtfully away. He had not gone far when he heard a youthful voice calling, "Say, mister," and then quickly the lad caught up with him. "Say, mister," he repeated, "I wanted to tell you that He rose again!"

The story was not ended with the crucifixion and burial of Jesus. There follows the glorious resurrection story, and most exciting of all is the message that this same Jesus is coming again.

After the resurrection, the disciples were talking together when Jesus Himself came into the room. These helpers were almost afraid when Jesus spoke. "Do not be afraid. It is I." They saw that this really was the living Lord Jesus.

"I must go away for awhile," Jesus said to His helpers.

"Then we will go with you," they said.

"You cannot go with me now," Jesus answered. "I am going back to get a new home in heaven ready for you. Someday I will come again and we will be together in our heavenly home."

The day came when Jesus was ready to go back to heaven. "Walk with me out in the country," Jesus said to His helpers. "After I am gone away you must go all over the world and tell people everywhere that I love them. Tell them God loves them too. Tell everybody that I am the living Saviour. Tell them I will come back again."

Then as Jesus spoke to His helpers, something wonderful happened. (Look on page 14 to see what it was.)

BIBLE CHARACTERS

ABRAHAM

Abraham, the father of the faithful, is one of the most outstanding characters in the Bible. He was the son of Terah, born around B.C. 2247. At the age of seventy-five, God called him and blessed him with a promise of Christ, and that he would be a father of many nations.

His faith in God seems to equal with that of Christ's. The greatest test of his faithfulness took place in offering his only son Isaac. No doubt this was the greatest test in faithfulness in the Bible.

He was a very wealthy man but was always charitable in dealing with his fellowmen.

Sarah, his wife, was a big help in his life. She admired him to the extent she called him lord.

Abraham had many talks with his God and was continually serving Him. The Lord had blessed him in all things in his long life. He died at the age of one hundred seventy-five years.

New Testament writers quote him often for his faith in God. How thankful we should be for such an example for us to follow.

—Kenneth Martin
Nappanee, Indiana

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. (Genesis 22:15-18)

THE PILGRIM

VOL. 11

MAY-JUNE, 1964

NOS. 5-6

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

CUR LIVES

Is our life like a ship that sails the sea
And leaves no trail behind?
Will those who follow the way we went
No encouraging way-mark find?
When the spirit has fled to the Great Beyond
And they bury our mortal frame,
Will the waves recede and the place forget
That once it had known our name?

Or will there be blazed on the sands of Time
A trail that's plain to view,
A trail that time can't quite erase,
That speaks of our passing through?
Will somebody say, "This way seems clear
For someone has gone before.
The deep-cut track is true and straight
As a light through an open door."

If our life is not hid with Christ in God,
While over life's way we tread,
The track we leave might lead away
From Him who died in our stead.
Then better if we, like the ship at sea,
Could travel an unmarked tide,
Than to leave a path that would lead astray
Someone for whom Christ died.

—Celesta O. Price

Modesto, California

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published monthly by Daniel F. Wolf in the interests of the members of The Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$1.50 per year. Sample copies sent free on request. Address: THE PILGRIM, Rt. 3, Box 1378, Modesto, Calif.

HATE

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? (I John 4:20)

This verse has no doubt condemned us all one time or another. When Satan can put hate in our hearts, he has his goal accomplished, because when our hearts are filled with hate, we cannot love God, and if we cannot love God, we cannot please Him or obey His teachings.

Hate was the cause for Cain to slay his brother, Abel, which happened very early in creation, and in following this word from then till now, it always spells sin.

How we can see and feel it in our time how it causes much suffering and pain, and how it has caused many souls to stumble and fall and caused churches to divide.

He that hateth his brother is in darkness and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes. How true this is! How we can see this in our time and even experience it! When we have a little hate in our hearts, how it wants us to use revenge or anything that would manifest the flesh. John wrote that when we hate we are blind and cannot see where we are going. So in knowing this, how careful we should be to guard against this evil. But in our weakness, it does come upon us before we realize it. In knowing we are afflicted with this, how careful we should be, because we are spiritually blind and know not what we do. We know that when people are naturally blind, how careful they are in going about, and how they depend on others to lead them. How much more careful we should be when we are spiritually blind. How we should pray to God and seek the spiritual help of others to lead us out of this blindness.

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

We have heard of hate in churches that would not end till certain ones died. How sad and wrong this is! As the tree falleth, so shall it lie. If it falls with hate, so will it come forth at the resurrection. And what we have at the resurrection will take us to eternity; either to life everlasting or to everlasting punishment. Which will we choose?

—Kenneth Martin.

Nappanee, Indiana.

VALID CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

According to New Testament examples and teaching by Jesus and the apostles, as also by competent historians from the beginning of the Christian era, it is established that triune immersion, when preceded by faith, repentance, and confession, is valid baptism. It is an initiation into the fold and family of the kingdom of Christ, and thus the subject's name is recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life.

There are three very prominent symbols mentioned in the New Testament scriptures to show and illustrate the content, import, and reality of Christian baptism: namely Birth, Burial, and Planting. The first of these is so clearly stated in the words of Jesus to Nicodemus, who perhaps with many others at that time, could not understand the mysteries revealed in the approaching kingdom of Christ, and so his question was a logical one, "Can a man enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" This seemed to him, and is, an impossibility. But Jesus opened the matter to him saying "Except a man be BORN of water and of the Spirit he can not see the kingdom of God." So it is evident that birth is a true symbol of Christian baptism.

The second of these symbols which we will notice is BURIAL. Rom. 6:4, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God." In death we are not just sprinkled with earth, but entombed and fully covered.

In the third symbol, PLANTING, it is common knowledge that the seed is put below the surface of the earth and covered. That seed remaining there but becomes transformed into a new plant. Rom. 6:5: "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

Now while these three symbols plainly prove, and bear testimony to the validity of immersion, yet it must also be remembered that the act in itself is powerless and fruitless unless accompanied by the good conscience, faith and repentance.

It seems to be a scriptural fact that if I go through this sacred rite of Christian baptism in its full implications and requirements, if I then fall away into deliberate sin I can not then go back and start over as before by being baptised a second, a third, or a fourth time, as is shown in Heb. 6:1,2. "Not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands."

Who but the Almighty One, and the individual who has gone through this sacred rite of Christian baptism can know if he has experienced its noble virtues: a new creature, a new life, new affections, and a new hope? Should one feel that through ignorance or otherwise he has not received the benefits of true baptism, that would be different.

There are two instances on record in which the brotherhood in becoming reunited with similar bodies, their converts were not rebaptised. Then, too, which among these plainer Dunkard fraternities, whose form of baptism is identical, can safely assume that she alone has the sole God-given authority and power to administer Christian baptism?

—David A. Skiles
Rossville, Indiana

The only real way to "Prepare to meet thy God" is to live with God, so that to meet Him will be nothing strange.

—Sunday School Herald

THE TRUMPET SHALL SOUND

Recently while discussing religion with a small group of fellows, I happened to mention that I was convinced that Christ would return to earth in power and majesty to judge all mankind. The reaction was one that I have found to be typical of the students here in Berkeley. There was not one person who agreed with me. Furthermore, one young man made the comment that "If Christ really were to return, it would be the biggest joke ever on mankind." This brought a great amount of laughter from the rest of the group, but I hastened to explain that this was no laughing matter. My words were in vain, however, and the discussion continued.

What is it that causes people here to turn their hearts away from God? It seems to me that the whole program of education today, with its seeming quest for the truth, is the very thing that is leading man away from the truth. This stems in part from the fact that this country was formed on the principle of separation of the church and state with freedom of religion. Originally this freedom allowed one to worship God as he would choose, but today it is taken to mean freedom from religion. Anything that is in any way related to Christianity must be kept out of the educational system today because the state supports education. Christianity offends the unbeliever, and since the state guarantees freedom of religion, it must protect the unbeliever by keeping all things pertaining to religion from him. Yet, in removing the Church from education, the balance is greatly upset. For example, it is proper to teach the ideas of Camus, Russell, Freud, and many other unbelievers as their ideas belong to no established church. However, these ideas are followed by many in place of the beliefs of Christianity or of any religion. In removing the Bible and Christ's teachings from education, a discrimination is merely being made. The unbeliever says in effect that "I won't let you teach your beliefs, but you can learn mine."

In addition to the philosophical ideas, one finds that many people today take the laws of science as the

supreme truths. They claim that the only god they can see is in these laws. They refuse to believe the Bible or if they claim to believe it, they explain everything on scientific principles. The claim is commonly made that the Bible may be true, but only in the sense that it was written symbolically for people who did not have our knowledge and now we must reinterpret it to suit this knowledge. Many are willing to accept some of the teachings of Christ but will not accept Him. According to them, He was not the Son of God, but found it expedient to make this claim because of the importance of his ideas. Today it appears that the believing Christian is the exception rather than the rule.

Thus, with the above ideas in mind, it is not surprising to find that few people believe that Christ will return, nor is it surprising to find that they do not believe in Him. Many unbelievers feel that Christ will not come because they do not believe He will. The Bible tells us to expect this. In Matthew 24:10-12, we read, "And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

Regardless of what men may believe, God has appointed a time when Christ shall come in power to judge all mankind. As we go through our lives we begin to see more and more the signs which Christ tells us about in Matthew 24. Though the world shall come to be farther and farther from Christ, we may take comfort in the promise that "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matthew 24:22.

Let us all as Christians remain firm and faithful. We must keep watching for we know not the day or the hour when Christ shall come and we want to be ready. Let us not be discouraged as the world around us grows cold for we know that in the fullness of time "shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with

power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matthew 24:30-31.

Glen Shirk
Berkeley, Calif.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS

Sometimes we become discouraged when we look too long at ourselves and the scenes around us. There is one effective remedy for this discouragement. It is to turn our eyes upon our Lord. Hebrews 12:3 says, "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." When we turn our eyes upon Jesus, we are made conscious of a number of facts. First, the Lord Himself has loved us enough to die for us, and His love is still the same. Second, we realize that all power is given unto Him, and if we have accepted Him, then we have His mighty power to enable us to overcome every obstacle including discouragement. Third, we realize that God's love reaches also to those around us, and this gives us an occupation to raise our sights above ourselves. Let us be channels for God's love to flow out to those around us.

It is when we lose sight of Jesus that our troubles seem large. Peter, walking on the water, began to sink when he took his eyes from Jesus and saw the wind and the waves around him.

When we look around us, let it be with the intention to count our blessings. We have so much to be thankful for that there is no room for complaining or despair. When we look at others, let it be with the intention to see some way we can help or encourage them.

Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. (Hebrews 12:12,13)

So let us look to Jesus, "the author and finisher of our faith". —L.C.

THE SHEPHERD'S PSALM

David starts out with these words, in this 23rd Psalm; "The Lord is my Shepherd." Of course, in general speaking, we all know who a shepherd is: one who cares for the sheep. Surely, David was referring to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as his Shepherd, was he not? As he acknowledged the Lord Jesus Christ as his Lord, when he broke forth in these words in the 110th Psalm: "The Lord sayeth unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Jesus says here in St. John 10:11-14, that he is the good Shepherd. Surely Jesus knew the nature of the sheep and how they yielded to the shepherd's tender care, in his day and time; as he expressed himself here in John 10:3,4,5; how he calleth his own sheep by name, and goeth before them, and leadeth them out, for they know him, and his voice: but strangers they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. It seems that the way David expressed himself here in this 23rd Psalm; rather places himself in the position of the sheep, under the good Shepherd's tender care. I wonder if there ever was anyone that knew any more about the nature and care of sheep than the little shepherd boy, David as he cared for his father's sheep which gave him plenty of time to meditate upon these things as the sheep grazed there on the Judean hills.

It seems to me that in these Psalms, also in the words of Jesus, and the Scriptures and prophecies in general, that if we had a better understanding of the conditions, customs, and much as to what they were referring to in their time, that it would become more of a reality to us, of the real meaning intended. As here in the following, how this Iberian shepherd reveals the literal meaning of this 23rd Psalm, a copy from the Readers Digest 1960, July number, by James K. Wallace:

THE BASQUE SHEEPHERDER AND THE SHEPHERD'S PSALM

Old Ferando D'Alfonso was a Basque herder employed by a big Nevada sheep outfit. He was rated as one of the best sheep rangers in the state, and rightly so;

for back of him were at least 20 generations of Iberian shepherds.

But D'Alfonso was more than a shepherd; he was a patriarch of his guild, the traditions and secrets of which have been handed down from generation to generation. Despite a long absence from his homeland he was, when I knew him, still full of the legends, the mysteries, the religious fervor of his native hills.

I sat with him one night under the clear, starry skies, his sheep bedded down beside a sparkling pool of water. As we were preparing to curl up in our blankets, he suddenly began a dissertation in a jargon of Greek and Basque. When he had finished, I asked him what he had said. In reply he began to quote in English the 23rd Psalm. There on the desert I learned the shepherd's literal interpretation of this beautiful poem.

"David and his ancestors," said D'Alfonso, "knew sheep and their ways, and David has translated a sheep's musing into simple words. The daily repetition of this Psalm fills the shepherd with reverence for his calling. Our guild takes this poem as a lodestone to guide us. It is our bulwark when the days are hot or stormy, when the nights are dark, when wild animals surround our bands. Many of its lines are the statements of the simple requirements and actual duties of a Holy Land shepherd, whether he lives today or followed the same calling 6000 years ago. Phrase by phrase, it has a well-understood meaning for us."

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

"Sheep instinctively know," said D'Alfonso, "that before they have been folded for the night the shepherd has planned out their grazing for the morrow. It may be that he will take them back over the same range; it may be that he will go to a new grazing ground. They do not worry. His guidance has been good in the past, and they have faith in the future because they know he has their well-being in view."

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.

"Sheep graze from around 3:30 in the morning until about ten. They then lie down for three or four hours

and rest," said D'Alfonso. "When they are contentedly chewing their cuds, the shepherd knows they are putting on fat. Consequently the good shepherd starts his flocks out in the early hours on the rougher herbage, moving on through the morning to the richer, sweeter grasses, and finally coming to a shady place for the forenoon rest in fine green pastures, best grazing of the day. Sheep resting in such happy surroundings feel contentment."

He leadeth me beside the still waters.

"Every shepherd knows," said the Basque, "that sheep will not drink gurgling water. There are many small springs high in the hills of the Holy Land, whose waters run down the valleys only to evaporate in the desert sun. Although the sheep need the water, they will not drink from these fast-flowing streams. The shepherd must find a place where rocks or erosion have made a little pool, or else he fashions with his hands a pocket sufficient to hold at least a bucketful."

He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

"In the Holy Land," went on D'Alfonso, "each sheep takes his place in the grazing line in the morning and keeps the same position throughout the day. Once during the day, however, each sheep leaves its place and goes to the shepherd. Whereupon the shepherd stretches out his hand and rubs the animal's nose and ears, scratches its chin, whispers affectionately into its ears. The sheep, meanwhile, rubs against his leg or, if the shepherd is sitting down, nibbles at his ear and rubs its cheek against his face. After a few minutes of this communion with the master, the sheep returns to its place in the feeding line."

Yea, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

"There is an actual Valley of the Shadow of Death in Palestine, and every shepherder from Spain to Dalmatia knows of it. It is south of the Jericho Road leading from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea, and it is a narrow de-

file through a mountain range. Climatic and grazing conditions make it necessary for the sheep to be moved through this valley for seasonal feeding each year.

"The valley is four and a half miles long. Its side walls are over 1500 feet high in places, and it is only 10 or 12 feet wide at the bottom. Travel through the valley is dangerous because its floor has gullies seven or eight feet deep. Actual footing on solid rock is so narrow in many places that a sheep cannot turn around, and it is an unwritten law of shepherds that flocks must go up the valley in the morning hours and down toward the eventide, lest flocks meet in the defile.

"About halfway through the valley the walk crosses from one side to the other at a place where the path is cut in two by an eight-foot gully. One side of the gully is about 18 inches higher than the other; the sheep must jump across it. The shepherd stands at this break and coaxes or forces the sheep to make the leap. If a sheep slips and lands in the gully, the shepherd's rod is brought into play. The old-style crook circles a large sheep's neck or a small sheep's chest, and the animal is lifted to safety. If a more modern narrow crook is used, the sheep is caught about the hoofs and lifted up to the walk.

"Many wild dogs lurk in the shadows of the valley, looking for prey. The shepherd, skilled in throwing his staff, uses it as a weapon. Thus the sheep have learned to fear no evil even in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, for their master is there to protect them from harm."

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.

"David's meaning is a simple one," said D'Alfonso, "when conditions on the Holy Land sheep ranges are known. Poisonous plants which are fatal to grazing animals abound. Each spring the shepherd must be constantly alert. When he finds the plants, he takes his mattock and goes on ahead of the flock, grubbing out every stock and root he can see. As he digs out the stocks, he lays them upon little stone pyres, some of

which were built by shepherds in Old Testament days, and by the morrow they are dry enough to burn. When the pasture is free from poisonous plants, the sheep are led into it and, in the presence of their plant enemies, they eat in peace."

Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

"At every sheepfold there is a big earthen bowl of olive oil and a large jar of water. As the sheep come in for the night, they are led to a gate. The shepherd lays his rod across the top of the gateway just above the backs of his sheep. As each sheep passes, he quickly examines it for briars in the ears, snags in the cheek or weeping of the eyes from dust or scratches. When such conditions are found, he drops the rod across the sheep's back and it steps out of line.

"Each sheep's wounds are carefully cleaned. Then the shepherd dips his hand into the olive oil and anoints the injury. A large cup is dipped into the jar of water, kept cool by evaporation in the unglazed pottery, and is brought out—never half full but always overflowing. The sheep will sink its nose into the water clear to the eyes, if fevered, and drink until fully refreshed.

"When all the sheep are at rest, the shepherd places his staff within reach in case it is needed during the night. Then he wraps himself in his woolen robe and lies down across the gateway, facing the sheep, for his night's repose.

"So," concluded D'Alfonso, "after all the care and protection the shepherd has given it, a sheep may well soliloquize in the twilight, as translated into words by David: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

We have such a loving example here in St. John 10: 7,9,11, of the good Shepherd's tender care, that Jesus gave us in his own word's. (Verse 7). . . Verily, Verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep, . . . (verse 9) I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, . . . (verse 11) I am the good Shepherd:

the good Shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. It seems that the life of a good shepherd, his main concern and interest is for his sheep. What a humble and loving picture we have of the good shepherd. When the sheep are all safe in the fold, he will wrap himself in his blanket, and lay down in the gate-way for the night, with his staff close by; "He is the door of the sheepfold."

—Humbly Submitted By

Paul H. Clark

Modesto, Calif.

DO NOT JUDGE OTHERS TOO HARD

Pray do not find fault with the man who limps
Or stumbles along the road,
Unless you have worn the shoes he wears
Or struggled beneath his load.
There may be tacks in his shoes that hurt,
Though hidden away from view,
Or the burden he bears, placed on your back,
Might cause you to stumble too.

Don't sneer at the man who's down today,
Unless you have felt the blow
That caused his fall, or felt the shame
That only the fallen know.
You may be strong, but still the blows
That were his, if dealt you
In the self-same way at the self-same time,
Might cause you to stagger too.

Don't be too harsh with the man who sins,
Or pelt him with words and stones,
Unless you are sure yea, doubly sure
That you have no sins of your own.
For, you know, perhaps if the tempter's voice
Should whisper as soft to you
As it did to him when he went astray
'Twould cause you to falter too.

Selected by Martha Myers

HYMN STUDY

WHEN I SURVEY THE WONDROUS CROSS

When I survey the wondrous Cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour content on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet;
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson like a robe
Spreads o'er His body on the tree;
Then am I dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of Nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

This well loved hymn is considered by many to be one of the greatest works of Isaac Watts. By the time he was 22 years old, Isaac Watts had composed 110 hymns and this hymn was no. 7 in his third edition.

No doubt the writer designed this great hymn for communion services and was inspired to compose it from the words of the apostle Paul from Gal. 6:14, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

It may seem a strange thing to the unbeliever that anyone could glory or rejoice in such a terrible symbol of suffering and death as the cross.

But when the lost soul comes to the realization that this Cross of Christ is the means of his Salvation, the picture will change from that of disregard and disdain, to joy unspeakable and full of glory.

When we realize, that it was the Prince of Glory, the Lamb of God, who became sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, then we can truly pour contempt on all our pride.

These lines are wonderful and almost beyond our comprehension and we are made to confess with the writer, "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all."

— Joseph L. Cover
Sonora, California

IT IS GOOD TO REMEMBER THAT:

"'Twas a sheep, not a lamb, that strayed away,
In the parable Jesus told;

A grown-up sheep, that had gone astray,
From the ninety and nine in the fold.

Out on the hillside, out in the cold,

'Twas a sheep the Good Shepherd sought
And back to the flock, safe in the fold.

'Twas a sheep the Good Shepherd brought.

And why for the sheep should we earnestly long,

And as earnestly hope and pray?

Because there is danger if they go wrong,

They will lead the lambs astray.

For the lambs will follow the sheep, you know,

Wherever the sheep may stray,

When the sheep go wrong, it will not be long

Till the lambs are wrong as they.

And so for the sheep we earnestly plead,

For the sake of the lambs, today;

If the lambs are lost, what terrible cost

Some sheep will have to pay."

From "The Gospel Messenger"

Selected by Orpha Wagner

Historical

THE PERSECUTION UNDER NERO, IN WHICH PAUL AND PETER
WERE HONOURED WITH MARTYRDOM IN THE CAUSE OF
RELIGION AT ROME.

Nero now having the government firmly established under him, and henceforth plunging into nefarious projects, began to take up arms against that very religion which acknowledges the one Supreme God. To describe, indeed, the greatness of this man's wickedness, is not compatible with our present object; and as there are many that have given his history in the most accurate narratives, every one may, at his pleasure, in these contemplate the grossness of his extraordinary madness. Under the influence of this, he did not proceed to destroy so many thousands with any calculation, but with such indiscriminate murder as not even to refrain from his nearest and dearest friends. His own mother and wife, with many others that were his near relatives, he killed like strangers and enemies, with various kinds of death. And, indeed, in addition to all his other crimes, this too was yet wanting to complete the catalogue, that he was the first of the emperors that displayed himself an enemy of piety towards the Deity. This fact is recorded by the Roman Tertullian, in language like the following: "Examine your records. There you will find that Nero was the first that persecuted this doctrine, particularly then when after subduing all the east, he exercised his cruelty against all at Rome. Such is the man of whom we boast, as the leader in our punishment. For he that knows who he was, may know also that there could scarcely be any thing but what was great and good, condemned by Nero." Thus Nero publicly announcing himself as the chief enemy of God, was led on in his fury to slaughter the apostles. Paul is therefore said to have been beheaded at Rome, and Peter to have been crucified under him. And this account is confirmed by the fact, that the names of Peter and Paul still remain in the cemeteries

of that city even to this day. But likewise, a certain ecclesiastical writer, Caius by name, who was born about the time of Zephyrinus bishop of Rome, disputing with Proclus the leader of the Phrygian sect, gives the following statement respecting the places where the earthly tabernacles of the aforesaid apostles are laid. "But I can show," says he, "the trophies of the apostles: for if you will go to the Vatican, or to the Ostian road, you will find the trophies of those who have laid the foundation of this church, and that both suffered martyrdom about the same time. Dionysius bishop of Corinth bears the following testimony, in his discourse addressed to the Romans. 'Thus, likewise you, by means of this admonition, have mingled the flourishing seed that had been planted by Peter and Paul at Rome and Corinth. For both of these having planted us at Corinth, likewise instructed us; and having in like manner taught in Italy, they suffered martyrdom about the same time.'" This testimony I have superadded, in order that the truth of the history might be still more confirmed.

- Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History

CUR THOUGHTS

What have you been thinking about today? Have they been thoughts that please Jesus, or are they thoughts of which you are ashamed? Our thoughts tell on us. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Our thoughts largely determine our character. Some wise man has said that many birds fly over our heads, but we can keep them from nesting in our hair. Often thoughts come into our heads from seemingly nowhere, but it is up to us to decide whether they shall stay there. We can ask God to keep our minds and thoughts. He will help us to think on those things which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report.

Selected by Martha Baker

INFLUENCE OF LITTLE THINGS

Drop a pebble in the water;
Just a splash and it is gone,
But there's a half a hundred ripples,
Circling on, and on, and on.
Spreading, spreading from the center;
Flowing on and out to sea,
And there is NO way of telling
Where the end is going to be.

Drop a word unkind and careless;
In a minute you forget,
But the little waves are flowing
And the ripples circling yet.
And, perhaps in some sad life,
A mighty wave of tears you've stirred;
Or disturbed a life that's happy,
When you dropped that unkind word.

Drop a word of cheer and kindness;
Just a splash and it is gone,
But there's a half a hundred ripples
Circling on, and on and on.
Bearing joy and hope and comfort
On each dashing, splashing wave,
'Till you wouldn't believe the volume
Of the one kind word you gave.

Drop a word of cheer and kindness;
In a minute you forget,
But the gladness still is swelling,
And the joy is circling yet.
And you've rolled a wave of comfort,
Whose sweet music can be heard,
Over miles and miles of water,
Just by dropping one kind word.

Author unknown

Selected by Orpha Barton

CHILDREN'S PAGE

JESUS WALKS ON THE WATER

One night Jesus' friends were in a boat on the lake. All at once a big storm came up. How the wind blew! The waves got bigger and bigger. They splashed into the boat.

Jesus' friends were afraid. Then they saw someone coming. But he was not in a boat. He was walking on the water.

Now the men were even more afraid. They did not know that this was Jesus. Jesus said, "Do not be afraid. It is I."

Peter called to Jesus. He said, "If you are really Jesus, tell me to come to you."

Jesus said, "Come."

Peter climbed out of the boat and began to walk on the water to Jesus. Then Peter felt how hard the wind was blowing. He saw how high the waves were. Peter was afraid. He began to sink. He called, "Jesus, save me."

Jesus put out his hand and saved Peter. He said, "Why were you afraid, Peter? Why didn't you trust me?"

Jesus and Peter climbed into the boat. Then the wind stopped blowing and the water was still again. Jesus' friends said to Jesus, "You are the Son of God."

Write the missing letters with a red pencil or crayon.

Pe__er was af__aid. Jes__ __ helped Pe__er.

Write the five red letters on the line below.

Jesus wants me to _____ him.

Jesus can do all things because he is the Son
of _____.

To Remember:

"What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee."

Psalm 56:3

—R.S.

BIBLE CHARACTERS

JOSHUA

This Old Testament man was known as "Oshea" in Numbers 13:8 where he is listed with the twelve spies whom Moses sent from the wilderness to search out the land of Canaan. He and Caleb were the only two who brought back a true and fearless report. Consequently, they were the only two men in all the camp of Israel over twenty years old who lived to possess the promised land.

After the death of Moses, God called Joshua to lead the children of Israel over Jordan into the land of Canaan to conquer and possess it. It was here the waters of the Jordan River piled up, and they all passed over on dry ground.

Once in Canaan, they observed the passover and ate corn, so there was no more need for manna any more.

One of the things Joshua has been well known for is the battle of Jericho. It was indeed a wonderful demonstration of faith to march around the city walls seven days, and then they just fell over.

During the battle with the Amorites one day, Joshua spoke to the Lord and said, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon. We are told the sun hastened not to go down for about a whole day, and there was no day before or after it where the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man.

Near the close of his life, Joshua called the people and admonished them to serve the Lord, and made the well-known statement, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Joshua lived to be 110 years old, leaving many examples for believers of our day.

—Paul Baker

Maple, Ontario

THE PILGRIM

VOL. 11

JULY-AUGUST, 1964

NOS. 7-8

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

MORE, MY GOD, OF THEE

Less, less of self each day,
And more, my God, of Thee;
Oh keep me in Thy way
However rough it be.

Less of the flesh each day,
Less of the world and sin;
More of Thy love, I pray,
More of Thyself within.

Riper and riper now,
Each hour let me become;
Less fond of things below,
More fit for such a home.

More moulded to Thy will,
Lord, let Thy servant be;
Higher and higher still--
Nearer and nearer Thee.

—Wholesome Words

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published monthly in the interests of the members of The Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$1.50 per year. Sample copies sent free on request. Publishing Editor: Leslie Cover; Consulting Editor: Daniel F. Wolf. Address: THE PILGRIM, Star Route, Box 1160, Sonora, Calif.

WATCH AND WAIT

How instinctive it is when we wait for the arrival of an expected friend, a train on which we expect to travel, or any event of special importance to think and watch and be ready for the expected moment, which will not occur without waiting until the time of its appearance. The inspired Preacher (Eccl. 3:1) has said, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." And in God's arrangement of the seasons we must wait till the proper time arrives, for we cannot look for January in July, or for harvest time in mid-winter.

The greatest time the world will have ever seen is the soon coming of our blessed Lord in the clouds of heaven to gather His elect from the four winds to catch them up into His holy presence to be forever and eternally with Him in His holy presence, away from sin and earth's manifold imperfections. No one can name or conceive of anything so desireable as to be in that celestial company. No one can name or conceive of anything so desolate, so terrible, so sad, and disappointing as to be left behind in that fateful day. How vivid will then appear the truth of the scripture, "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" What then? if I spend my life in luxury, pride, and the many vanities of the world, and so must meet the awful and dreaded judgments of Almighty God. Are these great opposites an incentive to watchfulness? They certainly should be.

To watch and wait to be in that happy company of God's elect in the great day of the Lord, to keep our garments spotless, is of highest importance. Great calamities are ahead and in store for this wicked world when Jesus comes to set up His reign upon the earth. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come upon the earth, and to stand before the Son of Man." In St. Mark's gospel we read: "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-

crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

But with our watching we must also wait patiently, "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." Gal. 5:5. Also Thess. 1:10, "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus; which delivered us from the wrath to come." To patiently wait for the coming of the Lord is essential as expressed in Luke 12:35-36, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately." The prophet Isaiah left us these beautiful words, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isaiah 40:31. So now shall we watch and wait, or sleep and be doomed?

—David A. Skiles
Rossville, Indiana

GRACE AND OBEDIENCE

"For the Grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:11, 12, 13, 14.)

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto

you. (Romans 6:15, 16, 17.)

There is a definite relationship in the true believer's life between the Grace of God and obedience.

We know not how to place the true value upon the Grace of God, but we do know it brings salvation to the reach of all who are conscious of its appearing unto them; so we do also know that by the experience of accepting this Grace that brings salvation, by the act of obedience of submitting wholly to God, to, as we read above, obey from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered, we may obtain salvation.

We cannot evade or deny that entire obedience to God must be a work of the heart. We must "yield ourselves servants to obey Him!" We must be born again, of water and of the Spirit to see and enter the Kingdom of God. (St. John 3:3,5)

The divine relationship of Grace and Obedience grows upon the believer as experience shows the way. As we advance along the narrow way "that leads to life," we realize the blessings of Grace and the joy of obedience.

Obedience is the divine condition of wholly yielding our will to God, and the true desire to follow the Lord in His appointed way; to be truly sincere-- not argumentive-- concerning His revealed will; to deeply, and gradually, more fully realize what God has done for us in bringing Salvation within the reach of us; so near that we may accept with heartfelt humility the divine remedy for sin, and apply this remedy for every ill.

Truly the means of Grace and will to do is prompted and executed by God, providing we accept God into our lives. His energizing power by the Holy Spirit entering into the new creature (2 Cor. 5:17) makes activity possible unto obedience.

The further experience of fellowship and service promotes the virtue of love to growth and activity in our lives.

Those are truly blest who come under the triple bond of fellowship with God:

1. If ye ask anything in my name I will do it.
2. If ye love me keep my commandments.
3. And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever. (St. John 14:15, 16)

To continue in the way of life, we feel the burden for lost souls grow upon us; the care and concern Jesus manifests to all descends to His children, wherein the love for the lost grows, and we can become "workers together with Him," and can join in the same plea with the Apostles and children of God at the beginning of this great work of salvation, and we can say "Amen" to the Word: "We then as workers together with Him beseech you also that ye receive not the Grace of God in vain." (2 Cor. 6:7)

If we do not co-operate, if we do not yield to His gracious will, if we do not obey from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto us, the Grace of God would be in vain to us, because obedience to God was left out. Jesus learned obedience by suffering. (Heb. 5:8) May we follow Him.

Disobedience is closely related to sin. Obedience aids God's work in us.

Obedience, and the Grace of God,
When in harmonious measure,
Continues as the saints have trod,
To build a lasting treasure.

For God so loved the sinners lost,
To be their loving Saviour,
That we by counting now the cost,
Obtain His gracious favor.

The Grace of God salvation brings,
And teaches us our duty;
Obedient to the King of Kings,
Receiving of His beauty.

Our Saviour Lord obedience learned
By suffering for the sinner,
And so the highest station earned,
And now the chief soul winner.

We too would follow in His ways,
Obedient to His calling,
That He be with us all our days
And keep us safe from falling.

So let us with our hearts true love
Accept His grace and keeping,
That God may send the Heavenly Dove
Till comes our time for sleeping.

Oh Lord, be near us with Thy care.
Work in us. Make us holy,
That in Thy labours we may share,
Like Thee be meek and lowly.

—Joseph I. Cover
Sonora, California.

WHAT WE NEED

That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children. (Psalms 78:6)

What America needs most is a revival of piety, the kind Mother and Father used to have; piety that counted it good business to stop for daily family prayers before breakfast, right in the middle of the harvest; that quit work a half hour earlier on Thursday night, so as to get the chores done and go to prayer meeting; that borrowed money to pay the preacher's salary and prayed fervently in secret for the salvation of the rich man who looked with scorn on such unbusinesslike behavior. That's what we need now to clean this country of the filth of graft and greed, petty and big; of worship of fine houses and big lands and high office and grand social functions.

—Selected by Guy Hootman

HYMN STUDY

CHILDREN OF THE HEAVENLY KING

Children of The Heavenly King,
As ye journey, sweetly sing;
Sing your Saviour's worthy praise,
Glorious in his works and ways.

Ye are trav'ling home to God,
In the way the father's trod;
They are happy now—and ye;
Soon their happiness shall see.

Shout, ye little flock, and blest;
You on Jesus' throne shall rest;
There your seat is now prepared
There your kingdom and reward.

Fear not, brethren, joyful stand
On the borders of your land;
Jesus Christ, your Father's Son,
Bids you undismayed go on.

Lord, obediently we'll go,
Gladly leaving all below;
Only thou our leader be,
And we still will follow thee.

This little hymn of courage and hope was written by John Cennick in 1742. He was born in 1718 of Quaker parents but raised in the Established Church. At the age of 19 he was converted and became an assistant minister to John Wesley. Later on he transferred his allegiance to Whitefield but the last years of his life were spent as a Moravian.

After his conversion he took the job of teaching in a school John Wesley and Whitefield had founded for the children of coal miners at Kingston near Bristol. There he not only taught but helped in the class meetings and in preaching. He became acquainted with the Welsh revivalist Howell Harris and joined him in out

of door evangelistic tours.

Cennick and Harris were preaching at Swindon when a mob gathered to torment them. They fired guns over the preachers' heads so close that the faces of both were blackened from the powder. Then they covered them with dust and sprayed them with filthy ditch water from a fire engine. While they were deluging Harris, Cennick preached, when they changed to Cennick Harris took up the talking. So they continued through the town until the engine broke down and the mob was forced to use buckets. A leading citizen of the town, Mr. Goddard, had loaned the mob his guns, halberd, and engine and instructed them to use the preachers as badly as possible only not to kill them. So all the time the mob was performing he sat on his horse and laughed.

This was just one of the many experiences of this evangelist's life. In four years Cennick wrote 500 hymns but time has weeded out all of them but this one. Originally it had 12 verses but now only five appear in most hymnals. This hymn is one of the old favorite Church hymns and only gives a hint of the turbulent life which John Cennick led as an Evangelist. Only the fourth verse gives us some glimpse of his fears and of the dangers of the earthly pilgrimage. We can be glad that of the 500 hymns this man wrote, at least this one survived.

—Joseph L. Cover
Sonora, California

Dear Readers,

I do not feel able to write each of the Members and Friends who have been so thoughtful in remembering me during my sickness by cards and letters, and I feel many prayers have been offered. My recovery is slow. Will you continue to pray? The Lord knows best; let His will be done.

Mail has meant much to me.

Martha J. Myers
Greenville, Ohio

THE PROPER USE OF THE BIBLE

By A. W. Tozer

The boast that the Bible is the world's best seller sounds a little hollow when the character and purpose of the Bible are understood.

It is not how many Bibles are sold that counts, nor even how many people read them; what matters is how many actually believe what they read and surrender themselves in faith to live by the truth. Short of this the Bible can have no real value for any of us.

A great deal is said, and rightly said, about the superiority of the Bible as literature. So beautiful are the words of prophet and psalmist, as well as those of our Lord and His apostles, that they can scarcely be made less than beautiful, even by the clumsiest translator. Speaking any word here in praise of the beauty of the Authorized Version (the one usually selected to be "read as literature") would be to gild the lily or set a candle to the sun; so I refrain. But to study the Scriptures for their literary beauty alone is to miss the whole purpose for which they were written.

The Bible was called forth by the moral emergency occasioned by the fall of man. It is the voice of God calling men home from the wilds of sin; it is a road map for returning prodigals; it is instruction in righteousness, light in darkness, information about God and man and life and death and heaven and hell. In it God warns, commands, rebukes, promises, encourages. In it He offers salvation and life through His Eternal Son. And the destiny of each one depends upon the response he or she makes to the voice of the Word.

Because the Bible is the kind of book it is, there can be no place for the detached, appraising attitude in our approach to it. "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord." God's Word is not to be enjoyed as one might enjoy a Beethoven symphony or a poem by Wordsworth. It demands immediate action, faith, surrender, committal. Until it has secured these it has done nothing positive for the reader, but it HAS in-

creased his responsibility and deepened the judgment that must follow.

Of the millions of Bibles bought during the last few years there is no certain way to discover how many are being read. But there is a pretty sure way to discover how many readers obey them. Total committal of a few hundred thousand persons to the message of the Bible anywhere in the world would work a moral revolution that would effect for good every facet of modern life. Since no such revolution has occurred, we can only conclude that the Best Seller is not being read, or at least not being obeyed.

In a time of disaster such as earthquake or flood, first-aid information and the instructions of the medical authorities are often matters of life or death. What would we think of a man if we found him at such a time comfortably reclined reading this material for its literary beauty? He might feel an aesthetic thrill at the terse, concise language and still die of typhoid, for his life depends not upon his admiration of the words of the official directives but upon his obedience to them.

As preposterous as such conduct would be, yet something like it is practiced constantly in a sphere where the consequences are far more weighty. Men who have but a little while to prepare themselves for the eternal world read the only Book that can tell them how—not to learn how, but to enjoy the literary beauty of the Book. Only the blindness of heart occasioned by sin would permit men so to do.

In recent years the Bible has been recommended for many other purposes than the one for which it was written. The peace of mind cults, for instance, manage to find in it oil for the troubled waters of the soul; but to make it work they must pick, choose, misunderstand and misapply quite literally to their heart's content. Now, the Bible when read honestly and responsibly does bring peace of mind, but only after it has first brought the heart to a repentance that is often anything but peaceful. When the entire life has been morally transformed and the heart purified

from sin, then the seeker can know real and legitimate peace. Any manipulation of the Scriptures to make them speak peace to the natural man is evil and can only lead to ruin.

In the hill country of the American South I once met persons who used certain obscure passages from Ezekiel as an incantation to stop blood after an injury. The Bible has also been made to serve as a textbook for salesmen, and some of us remember that during the depression of the 1930's some distraught leaders suggested that it might be well to adopt the economics of Joseph in Egypt to help pull us out of the hole.

A few years ago it was fairly popular practice for Bible teachers to claim to find in the Scriptures confirmation of almost every new discovery made by science. Apparently no one noticed that the scientist had to find it before the Bible teacher could, and it never seemed to occur to anyone to wonder why, if it was there in the Bible in such plain sight, it took several thousand years and the help of science before anyone saw it.

Now, I believe that everything in the Bible is true, but to attempt to make it a textbook for science is to misunderstand it completely and tragically. The purpose of the Bible is to bring men to Christ, to make them holy and prepare them for heaven. In this it is unique among books, and it always fulfills its purpose when it is read in faith and obedience.

— The Alliance Witness.

Selected by Daniel F. Wolf

If you have kind words to say,
Say them now.
Tomorrow may not come your way;
Do a kindness while you may;
Loved ones will not always stay;
Say them now.

Selected

THE MASTER IS COMING

They said, "The Master is coming
To honor the town today.
And none can tell at whose house or home
The Master may choose to stay.
And I thought while my heart beat wildly:
What if He should come to mine?
How would I strive to entertain
And honor the Guest Divine?

And straight I turned to toiling
To make my house more neat.
I swept and polished and garnished
And decked it with blossoms sweet.
I was troubled for fear the Master
Might come 'ere my task was done,
And I hastened and worked the faster
And watched the hurrying sun.

But right in the midst of my duties
A woman came to my door.
She had come to tell me her sorrows
And my comfort and aid to implore.
And I said, "I cannot listen
Or help you any today.
I have greater things to attend to."
And the pleader turned away.

But soon there came another—
A cripple, thin, pale, and gray.
And he said, "O let me stop and rest
Awhile in your home, I pray.
I've travelled far since morning.
I'm hungry, and faint, and weak.
My heart is full of misery,
And comfort and help I seek."

And I said, "I am grieved and sorry
But I cannot help you today.
I look for a great and noble guest."
And the cripple went away.
And the day wore on swiftly
And my task was nearly done.
And a prayer was in my heart
That the Master to me might come.

And I thought I soon would meet Him
And serve Him with utmost care.
When a little child stood by me
With a face so sweet and fair.
Sweet, but with marks of teardrops,
And his clothes were tattered and old;
A finger was bruised and bleeding,
And his little bare feet were cold.

And I said, "I am sorry for you.
You are sorely in need of care,
But I cannot stop to give it.
You must hasten elsewhere."
And at the words a shadow
Swept o'er his blue-veined brow,
"Someone will feed and clothe you, dear,
But I am too busy now."

At last the day was ended,
And my toil was over and done.
My house was swept and garnished,
And I watched in the dark, alone.
Watched but no footfall sounded;
No one paused at my gate;
No one entered my cottage door:
I could only pray and wait.

I waited till night had deepened,
And the Master had not come.
"He had entered some other door," I cried,
"And gladdened some other home."
My labor had been for nothing,
And I bowed my head and wept.
My heart was sore with longing;
Yet in spite of it all, I slept.

Then the Master stood before me,
And His face was grave and fair,
"Three times today, I came to your door
And craved your pity and care,
Three times you sent me onward
Unhelped and un comforted,
And the blessing you might have had was lost,
And your chance to serve has fled."

"Oh Lord, Dear Lord, forgive me.
How could I know it was Thee?
My very soul was shamed and bowed
In the depths of humility.
And He said, "The sin is pardoned,
But the blessing is lost to thee:
For comforting not the least of mine,
Ye have failed to comfort me."

Selected by Orpha Wagner

THE USE OF TIME

If you saw a man standing by the shore flinging gold coins and diamonds into the sea, you would say he was insane. Yet many people continually do something very like this. Not gold and precious stones do they throw away, but minutes, hours, days, weeks, and years of time--possessions which are of greater worth than any coins on earth.

Selected

Historical

THE FIRST SUCCESSORS OF THE APOSTLES

That Paul preached to the Gentiles, and established churches from Jerusalem and around as far as Illyricum, is evident both from his own expressions, and from the testimony of Luke in the book of Acts. And in what provinces Peter also proclaimed the doctrine of Christ, the doctrine of the New Covenant, appears from his own writings, and may be seen from that epistle we have mentioned as admitted in the canon, and which he addressed to the Hebrews in the dispersion throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. But how many and which of these, actuated by a genuine zeal, were judged suitable to feed the churches established by these apostles, it is not easy to say, any farther than may be gathered from the writings of Paul. For he, indeed, had innumerable fellow-labourers, or as he himself calls them, fellow-soldiers in the church. Of these, the greater part are honoured with an indelible remembrance by him in his epistles, where he gives a lasting testimony concerning them. Luke also, in his Acts, speaking of his friends, mentions them by name. Timothy, indeed, is recorded as having first received the episcopate at Ephesus, as Titus, also, was appointed over the churches in Crete. But Luke, who was born at Antioch, and by profession a physician, being for the most part connected with Paul, and familiarly acquainted with the rest of the apostles, has left us in two inspired books, the institutes of that spiritual healing art which he obtained from them. One of these is his gospel, in which he testifies that he has recorded, "as those who were from the beginning eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word," delivered to him, whom also, he says, he has in all things followed. The other is his Acts of the Apostles, which he composed, not from what he had heard from others, but from what he had seen himself. It is also said, that Paul usually referred to his gospel, whenever in his epistles he

spoke of some particular gospel of his own, saying, "according to my gospel." But of the rest that accompanied Paul, Crescens is mentioned by him as sent to Gaul. Linus, whom he has mentioned in his Second Epistle to Timothy as his companion at Rome, has been before shown to have been the first after Peter, that obtained the episcopate at Rome. Clement also, who was appointed the third bishop of this church, is proved by him to have been a fellow-labourer and fellow-soldier with him. Beside, the Areopagite, called Dionysius, whom Luke has recorded in his Acts, after Paul's address to the Athenians, in the Areopagus, as the first that believed, is mentioned by Dionysius, another of the ancients, and pastor of the church at Corinth, as the first bishop of the church at Athens. But the manner and times of the apostolic succession shall be mentioned as we proceed.

After Nero had held the government about thirteen years, Galba and Otho reigned about a year and six months. Vespasian, who had become illustrious in the campaign against the Jews, was then proclaimed sovereign in Judea, receiving the title of emperor from the armies there. Directing his course, therefore, immediately to Rome, he commits the care of the war against the Jews, into the hands of his son Titus; for after the ascension of our Saviour, the Jews, in addition to their wickedness against him, were now incessantly plotting mischief against his apostles. First, they slew Stephen by stoning him, next James the son of Zebedee, and the brother of John, by beheading, and finally James, who first obtained the episcopal seat at Jerusalem after the ascension of our Saviour, and was slain in the manner before related. But the rest of the apostles, who were harassed in innumerable ways, with a view to destroy them, and driven from the land of Judea, had gone forth to preach the gospel to all nations, relying upon the aid of Christ, when he said, "Go ye, teach all nations in my name." The whole body, however, of the church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by a divine revelation, given to men of approved piety there before the war, removed from the city, and dwelt at a certain town beyond the Jordan, called Pella.

(continued on page 20)

DEFINITION OF MATURITY

Maturity is many things. First, it is the ability to base a judgment on the Big Picture—The Long Haul. It means being able to pass up the fun-for-the minute and select the course of action which will pay off later. One of the characteristics of infancy is the "I want it NOW approach." Grown up people can wait.

Maturity is the ability to stick with a project or a situation until it is finished. The adult who is constantly changing jobs, changing friends, and changing mates—is immature. He cannot stick it out because he has not grown up. Everything seems to turn sour after awhile.

Maturity is the capacity to face unpleasantness, frustration, discomfort and defeat without complaint or collapse. The mature person knows he cannot have everything his own way. He is able to defer to circumstances, to other people—and to time.

Maturity is the ability to live up to your responsibilities, and this means being dependable. It means keeping your word. And dependability equates with personal integrity. Do you mean what you say—and say what you mean?

The world is filled with people who cannot be counted on. People who never seem to come through in the clutches. People who break promises and substitute alibis for performance. They show up late—or not at all. They are confused and disorganized. Their lives are a chaotic maze of unfinished business.

Maturity is the ability to make a decision and stand by it. Immature people spend their lives exploring endless possibilities and then do nothing. Action requires courage. And there is no maturity without courage.

Maturity is the ability to harness your abilities and your energies and to do more than is expected. The mature person refuses to settle for mediocrity. He would rather aim high and miss the mark than aim low and make it.

—Selected

CHILDREN'S PAGE

THE FOOLISH LITTLE ROBIN

One summer morning when the sun was shining,
A little robin was sitting in a tree.
He wanted so to go inside and hop upon the floor.
But,

"Oh, no!" his father said,

"You'd better stay with me, for little
birds are safest sitting in a tree."

Then the little robin said,

"I don't think my parents know
quite everything."

So,

down

he

flew.

The cat caught him, before he had time to think.

"Oh!"

He cried in sorrow---but then it was too late!

by Mervin Mullet, Grade 8

—The Fellowship Messenger

This story about the foolish little robin was written by a young boy. It tells what can happen when little birds get into dangerous places. Children can also get into serious trouble if they do not obey their parents.

See if you can find in your Bible, Ephesians 6:1 & 2. Here it says: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother." God says it is right to obey Father and Mother. He also says that this is good for us, and it helps to have a long life. We want to always obey Father and Mother, and then we can stay out of trouble, and God will be pleased with us.

Can you memorize Ephesians 6:1?

—L.C.

BIBLE CHARACTERS

ADAM

Adam, the first human, was created of the dust of the ground, a mature, perfect, man and did not need to spend the first 20 years or so in growing up. He was made in the very image of God and was His last and noblest work. Who can imagine what a thrilling experience it must have been to awaken to consciousness in creation's dawn and, through perfect faculties, behold the earth in its very good and sinless state? While none since Adam's time have enjoyed this rare opportunity, yet we believe it will be the blessed privilege of all born again believers who shall inhabit the "new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." These, like Adam, shall also have access to the tree of life.

The Lord God planted a beautiful garden in Eden and there He placed Adam "to dress it and to keep it." We are not told what was involved in this dressing and keeping but it evidently did not demand strenuous labor or a constant vigil against the weeds, fungi, and insects that continually threaten our gardens and orchards.

As the highest created being, Adam, by divine appointment, was given dominion over all living creatures. This would forbid the idolatrous animal worship practiced later even by God's chosen people. One of Adam's first duties was to name the creatures.

God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone." So He made a mate for the man and brought her to him. Adam said, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Jesus referred to this account as the precedent for the marriage relationship and noted that, being divinely ordained, it was not to be broken by man.

So far as we know there was but one restriction placed upon Adam to test his obedience. But he failed to meet the test and so had to accept the alternative of banishment from Eden and of living in sorrow upon a cursed earth. What a terrible sense of remorse and

guilt must have burdened this first pair as they were driven from their beautiful home in Paradise.

God's sentence was that Adam would surely die in the day that he disobeyed and indulged in the forbidden fruit. As Adam continued to live for centuries after the fall, in what sense are these words to be taken ?

It seems the Bible writers had to use earthly terms in attempting to describe heavenly things, and we must conclude that the scriptural meaning of the words life and death is not limited to the usual earthly understanding of them.

After the transgression Adam was afraid and ashamed and made a feeble effort to hide from his creator. Now, his intimate communion with his maker was dead.

The New Testament tells us that a person may be both living and dead at the same time as Adam was. It also tells us that we may pass from death to life. And Jesus said He came that we might have life. Adam did not have these precious promises.

Cain, Abel, and Seth are the only children of Adam mentioned by name, but the record says that during the last 800 years of his life he had other sons and daughters.

"And all the days that Adam lived were 930 years and he died."

—Harold Royer
Elkhart, Indiana

Historical...(continued from page 16)

Here, those that believed in Christ, having removed from Jerusalem, as if holy men had entirely abandoned the royal city itself, and the whole land of Judea: the divine justice, for their crimes against Christ and his apostles, finally overtook them, totally destroying the whole generation of these evil-doers from the earth.

Eusibius' Ecclesiastical History.

THE PILGRIM

VOL. 11

SEPTEMBER, 1964

NO. 9

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

COME UNTO ME.

"Come unto me," the Saviour calls
In charming accents sweet and low,
Before the robe of darkness falls,
Obscures the way that we should go.

"Come unto me," who toil in sin,
Frustrated, heavy-burdened down.
Eternal life is yours to win,
And wear a shining, golden crown.

"Come unto me." The narrow way
Leads upward to the hills of light.
In paths of evil do not stray;
Be found in standing for the right.

"Come unto me; I give you rest,"
From guilty ways and shattered peace.
Enjoy on earth the very best;
Begin to love and never cease.

"Come unto me." Soul's weary heart
Works on in apprehensive beat,
Fearful that pain and sorrow start
Ere rest is found for weary feet.

"Come unto me," for mercy's door
Now stands ajar before its close;
Oh welcome home to roam no more,
Soul's resting place secure from foes.

—J.I.Cover

Sonora, California

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published monthly in the interests of the members of The Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$1.50 per year. Sample copies sent free on request. Publishing Editor: Leslie Cover; Consulting Editor: Daniel F. Wolf. Address: THE PILGRIM, Star Route, Box 1160, Sonoma, Calif.

"MYSTERY"

According to Webster's English dictionary, a mystery is: 1) Something that has not or cannot be explained. 2) A profound secret, something unknown to all, or concealed from some. 3) Retrospectively, Of what has been, but is no longer unexplained or unexplainable.

This last definition seems to be the meaning of the "mystery" which the apostle Paul speaks of in Ephesians 3:3-11, "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; . . . which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel . . . And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. . . of whom the whole family in heaven and earth are named."

This "mystery", then, pertains to God's eternal purpose, before the creation of the world, to have a people for his own possession; and reveals the method and means by which it is to be accomplished, viz, that all of the heirs of his promise are to be united into one family in Jesus Christ its head, and of whom it is named. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:22,23.

Our text in Eph. 3 is a more comprehensive exposition of what Paul had previously written in Romans 16: 25,26, where it is said, "Now to him that is of

power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. . . ."

This is no doubt the same "mystery" of which Jesus spoke in Matt. 12: 11, 35: "Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" And, "I will open my mouth in parables. I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world."

The text in Eph. 3 does not say that other ages were totally unaware of God's purpose to bring salvation to the human race and have a people for his own possession. But it does say it was not made known to them as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. It was a mystery. They knew of it, but it was not explained.

Redemption was promised in Eden at the time of the fall through a mighty one called the "seed of the woman" which we know now is Christ. And Abraham was promised an innumerable "seed" who were to be the people of God. But the method by which this was to be accomplished was not understood until after Christ came and revealed it to those whom he chose for this purpose.

The prophets had spoken profusely of the salvation of God that was to come upon the Gentiles, and how they would share in the blessing of the promised seed of Abraham. But it seems not to have been known that they would be included in the same body with the ancient chosen people of God, to be fellow heirs with them of the promises of God to their fathers.

The apostle Paul, elaborating on this theme in Rom. 15: 8-12 says, "Now I say that Jesus Christ was the minister of circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. And again he

saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust."

Thus it was revealed to the Old Testament prophets that the Gentiles would be accepted of God and share in the promised blessing in Jesus Christ. But it seems not to have been understood by those that heard them that this was to be accomplished by all of them being united in one body. Although Peter witnessed God's acceptance of the household of Cornelius by granting the Holy Ghost to come upon them as he did to the house of Israel at the first, and faithfully defended it before his brethren at Jerusalem who called him in question for what he did, he seemed not to have fully understood that by this act of God they were fully integrated into the same body with the chosen people of God. For it was after this, when he went to Antioch that he withdrew himself and would not eat with the Gentile converts.

Jesus had said in St. John 10: 16, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."

The whole book of Ephesians seems to have been written to elucidate and emphasize that the people of God are a united sainthood in one body in Jesus Christ which is called the CHURCH. In Chapter two it is said, "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." And in chapter four it is said, "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, and through all and in you all."

The Church is God's dearest possession; It is the

supreme expression of his love. For we are told in Ephesians 5 that Christ loves the Church and gave himself for it. And it is the highest order of relationship for it is said that the Church is as related to Christ as a wife is to her husband. Ephesians 3:10 says that God will have the Church to demonstrate to the principalities and powers in heavenly places His "manifold wisdom". The Church is a New Creation because it was composed and established of a reborn people. In Isaiah 66:8 the prophet asked what seemed to be an impossible thing when he said, "Shall a nation be born at once?" This question was answered on the day of Pentecost. A nation WAS born at once. For, "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

They were all children of Abraham according to the flesh receiving the promise that was made to their father in Christ Jesus four hundred and thirty years before the covenant at Sinai. It was not a different people, but the same people under a new covenant that is called in Heb. 10 "A new and living way." In Heb. 10 it is said that the sacrifices which they offered under the Old Covenant could never take away sins, and the law that was given at Sinai was written in tables of stone. But under the New Covenant sins are forgiven (removed) and the laws of God are written in the heart.

Thus the Church was composed and established first of members of the old commonwealth of Israel who became the living body of Christ with power to increase and grow, which it did. And then after many thousands of other Israelites had joined the church the door was then opened to the Gentiles to become fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.

How thankful we should be for the Church, and that we who were sometimes far off are now made nigh by the blood of the cross. And become fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.— D. F. Wolf

THREE ORGANIZATIONS, ON EARTH ORDAINED BY GOD

These three are the family, the Church, and the civil government. The family or root stock from which the other two must spring is a most sacred institution, when husband and wife are joined together by divine sanction, and where connubial bliss and affection can only be put asunder by the hand of DEATH. It is here in the home where generates the fabric that must sustain the true Church of Christ, as also the "powers that be", which are ordained of God, even though they should fall into disfavor and degeneracy in the eyes of a righteous God, as has been the history of both Church and state.

As the family is the forerunner of the Church, which is the highest attainment that exists for humanity, so the true Church is the forerunner and stepping stone to the celestial Kingdom when Christ will reign for a full millennium on earth in the end of which He will turn over the Kingdom to God, and God will be all in all, the saints be His people, and He be their God, in the new Heaven and new Earth throughout eternal existence.

The true Church is the highest attainment on earth for humanity. Yet He who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life has not left the Church without obligations toward the powers that be, or civil government, for we are told that he is the minister of God to thee for good, and must be obeyed so long as her demands are not in conflict with the supreme law of Christ. Fear to do evil, for he beareth not the sword in vain. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews." If Christ-like power were in the sword, would He not have used it in the extreme hour of trial? But at that time for the Christian He forever CONSIGNED IT TO THE SHEATH. It is evident that the greatest contribution that the Christian can extend toward the powers that be is "supplication for them at the Throne of

Grace".

As the family is the stepping stone to the Church of Christ, so the Church of Christ is the sure avenue and stepping stone to the Rest that remains to the people of God, the height and fullness of glory in the Kingdom of God, the glorious resurrection, and reunion of all the sanctified ones, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

—David A. Skiles
Rossville, Indiana

EDITORIAL...

This is my commandment that ye love one another as I have loved you. (John 15:13)

These words of Jesus carry indescribably deep meaning and obligation. And because of the tremendous power of love, obedience to this command brings positive, certain results. Jesus commands us to love as He has loved. To describe the depth of this love, He follows this command with the words: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Jesus then demonstrated by His death that He has this love for us and that we must have it for each other.

Love or "charity" is further described in I Corinthians 13. In part it says, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up...seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked...beareth all things..." It also says, "Charity never faileth." This describes love to be a working, successful force without trace of selfishness or pride.

Many times we use the word "love" to describe the spontaneous feeling of attraction of man and woman to each other. This is not an expression from our wills but only a natural feeling or attraction. But true love, even between man and woman, is not always a natural reaction. It takes effort, and willingness to give and share to make up true love. The Lord commands us to love each other and even our enemies. So this

love is a feeling (or might we say an action) that we can obtain by our wills. Let us not excuse ourselves, even in our own minds, by reasoning that some certain people are just hard or impossible to love. Let us not be guilty of loving only those who love us. This is easy. It is natural to return love, but it is not so easy or natural to "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."

Is it possible that we mistakenly feel that our love for each other must be a reaction to good treatment? Let us not rely on this natural reaction but make this love an intentional, willing expression to each other. Let it be our aim and purpose to obey this command of our Lord's. If we do, we will find ourselves loving those to whom we are not necessarily attracted. We will make new friends, our circles will be widened, and the influence of this love will be felt more and more. We will become channels for God's love to flow to those who need it most. Best of all, this love flowing through us will sweep out prejudice and strife, and will be in us a force for good that cannot be resisted. Charity never faileth. —L.C.

The members of the Salida congregation were very glad when a young sister, Dorothy Shirk, accepted Christ and received baptism on August 30, 1964. May God guide her all her life, and make her an inspiration to those who know her.

COMMUNION NOTICE

The Salida Congregation have agreed, the Lord willing, to hold our fall Love Feast on November 14 and 15 of this year. A hearty invitation and welcome is extended to all the brethren and sisters and friends to attend. —D.F.W.

HYMN STUDY

JESUS, I MY CROSS HAVE TAKEN

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee;
Destitute, despised, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my all shalt be;
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, and hoped, and known,
Yet how rich is my condition,
God and heaven are still my own!

Let the world despise and leave me,
They have left my Saviour, too:
Human hearts and looks deceive me;
Thou art not, like them, untrue;
And while Thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love and might,
Foes may hate, and friends may shun me,
Show Thy face and all is bright.

Go then, earthly fame and treasure!
Come, disaster, scorn and pain!
In Thy service pain is pleasure;
With Thy favor loss is gain.
I have called Thee, Abba, Father;
I have stayed my heart on Thee;
Storms may howl, and clouds may gather,
All must work for good to me.

Man may trouble and distress me,
'Twill but drive me to Thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me,
Heav'n will bring me sweeter rest.
O 'tis not in grief to harm me,
While Thy love is left to me;
O 'Twere not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmixed with Thee.

This hymn was written by Henry Francis Lyte in 1824 when he was thirty one years old. He was born in

Scotland in 1793 and became an orphan while still a child. At the age of twenty one, he entered the ministry of the Anglican Church and was first assigned to a small parish in Ireland. His true conversion came while attending the deathbed of a neighboring clergyman. It seemed that this minister was not prepared to die, and both men began to search the Bible to find out how he could be saved. In their search, they both received a deep religious experience which made a great change in Lyte's life.

This experience and change left him with poor health as the strain of opposition began to tell on him. He spent the most of his remaining days at Lower Brixham in Devonshire as the pastor in this little fishing village.

He labored for twenty four years among these fishermen and earned their love and respect. It was here that he wrote all of the hymns that made him famous the world over.

This hymn is truly one of full commitment to Christ, and could well be sung from the heart of every sincere Christian, especially a new convert.

In the first verse, we are reminded of the words of Peter in Mark 10:28 which says, "Lo, we have left all and followed thee." Also, Jesus' words in Matthew 16:24, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." In the last line of the third verse, Lyte must have thought of the words of Paul in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

The last verse tells of the author's trials and troubles in life and his fond hope of sweet rest in Heaven.

—Joseph L. Cover
Sonora, California

Everything that God created is good for the purpose for which it was created--man can only misplace that purpose.

—Selected

Historical

THE PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS UNDER DOMITIAN

Domitian, having exercised his cruelty against many, and unjustly slain no small number of noble and illustrious men at Rome, and having, without cause, punished vast numbers of honourable men with exile and the confiscation of their property, at length established himself as the successor of Nero, in his hatred and hostility to God. He was the second that raised a persecution against us, although his father Vespasian had attempted nothing to our prejudice.

In this persecution, it is handed down by tradition, that the apostle and evangelist John, who was yet living, in consequence of his testimony to the divine word, was condemned to dwell on the island of Patmos. Irenaeus, indeed, in his fifth book against the heresies, where he speaks of the calculation formed on the epithet of Antichrist, in the above-mentioned revelation of John, speaks in the following manner respecting him. "If, however, it were necessary to proclaim his name (i.e. Antichrist) openly at the present time, it would have been declared by him who saw the revelation, for it is not long since it was seen, but almost in our own times, at the close of Domitian's reign." To such a degree, indeed, did the doctrine which we profess, flourish, that even historians that are very far from befriending our religion, have not hesitated to record the persecution and martyrdoms in their histories. These, also, have accurately noted the time, for it happened, according to them, in the fifteenth year of Domitian.

When the same Domitian had issued his orders that the descendants of David should be slain; according to an ancient tradition, some of the heretics accused the descendants of Judas, as the brother of our Saviour, according to the flesh, because they were of the family of David, and as such, also, were related to Christ. This is declared by Hegesippus as follows.

"There were yet living of the family of our Lord, the

grandchildren of Judas, called the brother of our Lord, according to the flesh. These were reported as being of the family of David, and were brought to Domitian, by the Evocatus. For this emperor was as much alarmed at the appearance of Christ as Herod. He put the question, whether they were of David's race, and they confessed that they were. He then asked them what property they had, and how much money they owed. And both of them answered, that they had between them only nine thousand denarii, in the value of a piece of land containing only thirty-nine acres; from which they raised their taxes and supported themselves. When asked also, respecting Christ and his kingdom, what was its nature, and when and where it was to appear, they replied, 'that it was not a temporal nor an earthly kingdom, but celestial and angelic; that it would appear at the end of the world, when coming in glory he would judge the quick and dead, and give to every one according to his works.' Upon which, Domitian despising them, made no reply; but treating them with contempt, as simpletons, commanded them to be dismissed, and by a decree ordered the persecution to cease. Thus delivered, they ruled the churches, both as witnesses and relatives of the Lord. When peace was established, they continued living even to the times of Trajan." Tertullian also has mentioned Domitian thus: "Domitian had also once attempted the same against him, who was, in fact, a limb of Nero for cruelty; but I think, because he had yet some remains of reason, he very soon suppressed the persecution, even recalling those whom he had exiled. But after Domitian had reigned fifteen years, and Nerva succeeded to the government, the Roman senate decreed, that the honours of Domitian should be revoked, and that those who had been unjustly expelled, should return to their homes, and have their goods restored." This is the statement of the historians of the day. It was then also, that the apostle John returned from his banishment at Patmos, and took up his abode at Ephesus, according to an ancient tradition of the church.

—Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History

CHILDREN'S PAGE

THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN

One day Jesus told this story:

There was a man who planted some grapes. The man had to go away to a far country. He asked some husbandmen, or farmers, to take care of the grapes when was gone.

When the grapes were ripe, the man sent one of his servants to ask the farmers for some of the fruit. But the farmers beat the servant and sent him back without any grapes. The man sent another servant. But the farmers threw stones at him. Then the man sent a third servant, and the wicked husbandmen killed him.

At last the man sent his own dear son. He said, "They will be kind to my son."

But the wicked farmers were not kind, They said, "Here is the man's son. Let us kill him. Then all the grapes will be ours." So they took the son and killed him.

Then Jesus said to the people, "What do you think the man who planted the grapes will do? He will kill the wicked farmers and let other farmers take care of his grapes."

Jesus told this story to the wicked men who wanted to kill Him. These were the same men who wanted to have Jesus killed on the cross.

When the wicked men heard this story, they knew they were like the wicked farmers. But they would not believe that Jesus is God's Son.

Jesus could have saved Himself from the wicked men who wanted to kill Him. But Jesus chose to die on the cross to take the punishment for our sin so He could give us everlasting life.

Make the starred letters red. They will tell you why God sent His Son to die for you.

H E T R L O V E S U S Y O U T
* * * * *

Place the other five letters on the blanks below to see what God wants us to do.

— — — — — G O D.

-- R.S.

BIBLE CHARACTERS

ELIJAH

As we endeavor to assemble a meaningful composition of this mighty man of God, we are at a loss to know where to begin. Compared to some of the Old Testament prophets, there is a lot written in the Scriptures concerning Elijah. And yet little is said directly about his character and background. But as we behold the mighty and wonderful works of God wrought to a nation that had turned from the "true and living God" to serve idols, we must know that God saw in him someone that was faithful, trusting and fearless to go against seemingly great odds to carry out His commands.

For our purpose just now, it matters little that he was a Tishbite of the tribe of Naphtali, and that his home was in Gilead. But it does seem significant that we find a man content with a small portion of "this world's goods" in close communion with God's creation, ready and willing to do the Lord's bidding. Truly this is one Old Testament lesson "written for our learning."

On first mentioning of Elijah, we find Israel, the northern kingdom, deep in idolatry completely oblivious of their faithfulness to the Great I AM. God seemed to be looking for a man through whom He could turn the hearts of the people back to Him. Elijah was just the man He was looking for. We have to wonder why God just did not in some miraculous way show the people their great sin by Himself. But it seems this is not God's plan in dealing with mankind. He has ever worked through the instrumentality of man. And God is still looking for men to "stand in the gap." Here we find Elijah before that wicked king Ahab pronouncing, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word."

This bold declaration put his life in danger, but God had a plan to protect and preserve him, so He told him to go to the brook Cherith where He commanded the

ravens to bring him bread and flesh. God always shows the second step when we are willing to take the first one by faith.

By and by the brook went dry because of the drouth, so God tells Elijah to go to Zarephath that belonged to Sidon, a Gentile nation. This seems to be significant because we find Elijah through his miracles bringing sustenance and joy to a poor Gentile widow. Might this not be a type of the ultimate grace that was to come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ?

Some three years had passed since Elijah had stood before King Ahab and proclaimed there would be no rain till he said so. Finally the word of the Lord came to Elijah saying, "Go show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth." The time was ripe for Elijah's work on Mt. Carmel. Surely the people had done a lot of thinking since the rain had ceased. Times of disaster always make people think of God, it seems.

Elijah came to the people saying, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." Is not this same thing true today? So many people are undecided whether to serve the Lord or not. We need to be reminded of this wonderful demonstration of Mt. Carmel when marvelous faith brought fire down from Heaven showing beyond a shadow of a doubt that, "The Lord, He is God!" Consequently, all the prophets of Baal were killed by Elijah. Then from the top of Mt. Carmel, Elijah prayed for the rain that he told Ahab would come, attesting once again to his wonderful faith.

Up until this time, Elijah seems to be a supernatural man, but when that wicked wife of King Ahab, Jezebel, threatened his life because he had killed the prophets of Baal, he ran for his life. Next we find him at Mt. Horeb, God asking him, "What doest thou here Elijah?" Here we find a man despondant and discouraged thinking that his work for the Lord had all been in vain. How the devil delights to get us in this condition. By speaking to him in a still, small voice, the Lord seemed to be telling him that He does

not always deal with man by a spectacular demonstration of power, such as by a mighty wind, earthquake, or a fire. "So take heart. I still have a work for you to do, even if it is not so spectacular."

God then directs him to anoint Hazael to be king of Syria, and Jehu to be king of Israel, and Elisha to take his place as prophet.

Once again we find Elijah before King Ahab at God's direction pronouncing the king's fate because of his sin in getting Naboth's vineyard.

Elijah's life comes to a most glorious end. He was caught up to Heaven in a chariot of fire. What a wonderful testimony that this man pleased God! For there have only been two men taken to Heaven without seeing death: Enoch and Elijah.

Elijah is spoken of several times in the New Testament. He is the antitype of John the Baptist. Their work seemed to be similar. Elijah's work was to turn Israel from their sin of idolatry back to the true and living God. John the Baptist's message was repentance also.

We also find him on the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses and Jesus.

These accounts seem to put him on a plain of faith unattainable by the common man, but let us all take courage in the words of the Apostle James. "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months."

—Melvin Coning
Coshen, Indiana

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more... (II Kings 2:11,12)

THE PILGRIM

VOL. 11

OCTOBER, 1964

NO. 10

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

THE OCEAN OF LIFE

I need a pilot on the ocean of life
Ere I launch my frail boat in its storm and strife,
So my barque may not flounder on a sandy shoal
Or be caught in the tempest while the breakers roll.

I need chart and compass on life's stormy sea,
That its waves and its billows do not roll over me,
To guide my boat safely till I reach the far shore
Where the water is calm and the storms are no more.

My Pilot is He who has said, "Peace, be still,"
He can still calm the waves if it be His will,
Or can keep me from sinking though stormy the sea,
Still my fears with His whisper "I am ever with thee."

My chart and my compass, my Pilot has given
In His book, the Bible, that leads us to Heaven.
Its words chart my course to the Haven of Rest,
Past the shoals and the rocks in the way He sees best.

by Annie Baker

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published monthly in the interests of the members of The Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$1.50 per year. Sample copies sent free on request. Publishing Editor: Leslie Cover; Consulting Editor: Daniel F. Wolf. Address: THE PILGRIM, Star Route, Box 1160, Sonora, Calif.

ABIDE IN HIM

In the first epistle of John, chapter 2, verse 28, we read: "And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming." Every other abiding place save in Jesus is the sure road to shame, despair, and destruction. In the natural pursuits of life, our pathway is beset with dangers innumerable, and the public cry of authorities warns against the many dangers that are so prevalent today, which often result in broken bodies and grievous sorrow in family circles.

All that, however, is but a shadow of the desperation, anguish, and endless suffering of those who are not within and abiding in the glorious refuge of our Lord Jesus Christ at the great and notable time when He descends in the clouds of Heaven to claim those who are IN HIM, gotten into Him, and abide in Him.

In the above scripture the apostle was not speaking to the high, lofty, noble, and proud, but his address was so beautifully and significantly given to LITTLE CHILDREN, though they be adults, for it is said, "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom." For it is the little ones who can bend and bow to the one who has said, "I am meek and lowly in heart."

He who is the way, the truth, and the life has also shown how we get into Christ, (Gal. 3:27) "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Then abiding in Christ we are sustained by eating His flesh, and drinking His blood, for in John 6:56 it is written, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwellleth in me and I in him," which may be interpreted by the words of Jesus where He said, "My

meat is to do the will of my Father which is in heaven."

It is not only essential that we enter into Christ, but that we also abide in Him so we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. "For who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?" "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity. . . He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."

The first advent of our blessed Saviour into the world was of great moment, but because of His humble, simple, and unpretentious life, many did not see Him as the great emancipator of humanity from a sin-ruined world. But when He comes the second time in great power and glory, not only the saints shall see Him in glory and rapture, but every other eye shall also see Him, but with greatest dread and desire to flee from His all-seeing eye. Then how vast the need that we abide in Him who said, "Draw nigh unto me, and I will draw nigh unto you." For the crown is not in the beginning, nor in the middle, but to them who hold out faithful unto the end.

Abide with me, fast falls the even-tide,
The darkness deepens, Lord with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, Oh abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day.
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need Thy presence every passing hour;
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who but Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Oh abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies;
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee.
In life, in death, O Lord abide with me. (Lyte)

—David A. Skiles

WITHOUT DISSIMULATION

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil: cleave to that which is good. (Rom. 12:9)

Indeed it is well for us that we have instruction how to live that will be of highest benefit and acceptable to God who has told us what not to do, and also what to do, and what should be our attitude regarding good and evil.

To manifest love without dissimulation, that is, without pretence, is love in its purest and highest form. So then, pure love to God and our fellowmen brings us in open conflict against evil because we love the truth--the Word of God--and all the good virtues that are so upbuilding, so satisfying, and rewarding, that our attachment and affections are upon things above and the good that God is willing and able to bestow.

To abhor that which is evil is indeed an attainment that can be had as we practice "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts." Also, we must cease to love the world. (I John 2:15) Is it possible that we may love the very kingdom and state of evil that could be the very cause of our destruction, and prevent the love of the Father being in us? Is it not often a fact that it is so hard to become free from sin because we may love evil? Then is it not very reasonable that we abhor that which is evil? Evil that has such dreadful consequences. Evil that is a rotten, settled condition of sin that can bring on leprosy and cancer of the soul and finally separate us eternally from our Creator. Evil that represents all the shades and degrees of sin and filthiness of the flesh and spirit. (II Cor. 7:1)

God has revealed to us the exceeding sinfulness of sin (Rom. 7:13) and the dire consequences of evil so that we may well recede with horror from these vile conditions that can be the result of sins unchecked and unrepented of. Well may we tremble from viewing these results from evils that may fasten upon us a more loathsome condition than any bodily disease!

Yes, dear reader, we must abhor that which is evil in order to make any progress to be free from this vile condition. We cannot afford to dissimulate or pretend in this matter; we must be honest and confessing of our faults, and of course, use the last recommendation of this text: "Cleave to that which is good."

The good that God offers--"All things that pertain to life and godliness" (II Peter 1:3)--are the virtues that, by accepting them, diffuse, fill up, and incite to spiritual activity. By being workers together with God, counteracting the ways of sin and folly, we will continually abhor the evil when engaged in living for God.

Let there be no reluctance in accepting every good word, will, and work of God. Let us in no way belittle any command or instruction in the way of righteousness!

The devil offers, suggests we be active in ways of sin. God directs that we be active in ways of righteousness. He has made this condition possible by Jesus Christ coming into the world, making the Atonement, dying for our sins, freeing us from service to evil if we accept the remedy. And He has said, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9) Also, He says, "But now being made free from sin, and become the servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." (Romans 6:22)

Surely the test of an active Christian life for God is love without dissimulation, a real abhorance of that which is evil and to cleave to that which is good. It would not benefit us to dissimulate in this.

In all I think and say and do,
May I devoted be;
My unpretended love be true
In service Lord to Thee.

May I abhor all evil ways
Of sin's dark downward road;
And live to witness and to praise
Who bore the heavy load.

And may I hold and highly prize
The virtues of Thy grace;
Receive Thy blessings from the skies
And run the Christian race;

To look ahead beyond the vale
Where all are pure and free;
Then some day furl the open sail
To be at home with Thee.

—J.I.Cover
Sonora, California

MY MASTER UNDERSTANDS

by Margaret Horst

Thou soul of mine, forget thy doubts and fears,
God has been true to thee through stormy years,
Through every doubt He was thy faithful Guide,
In every trial He was by thy side,
Then trust Him now--He sees thy bitter tears.

Behold the man of sorrows! See Him weep!

He, too, was through the waters cold and deep,
He understands thy grief, thy aching dread,
He pities thee! He doth anoint thy head
And stoops to help thee up the mountain steep.

Oh, see the blood-stained, briar-torn robe He wears;

He kneels to help His own, their sorrow shares!
So hold the promise close within thine heart.

Of every burden He will bear a part;
He understands! He knows! And, oh, He cares!

Then soul of mine, be strong and look above,

Lift up thine eyes--yes, even like a dove,
Soar far above, beyond the sea of strife

And on to God, for He shall guide thy life,
'Til thou shalt dwell at last within His love.

from "The Church Correspondent"

THE CLOSED BIBLE AND THE OPEN MIND

Carlton R. Van Hook

The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple. (Psalm 119:130)

Sometime recently I attended a banquet held by the graduates of a certain theological school of long and famous history. The addresses which were given impressed me by their insistence upon one prime requisite for the student, for the members of the faculty; in fact, for everyone. This requisite was "the open mind." We were told again and again that this was fundamental and that when students attended this college they were encouraged to bring with them an open mind—wide open, in fact.

There was not much said about the Bible. We were not told that the Bible was any supreme book of authority nor that a theological school was supposed to teach the Bible as God's Word, and that young men who were training for the ministry should have above all things else a firm, vivid, intellectual and spiritual understanding of the Book. I say, we did not hear much about that. I certainly am loath to believe that this was intentional or that any disrespect or doubt of God's Holy Word was in the minds of the speakers. But the fact remains that the changes were rung, not on any criterion or standard of faith and belief, but on the open mind. I wonder if there is not a fallacy here and likewise if there is not a real tragedy. Certainly no one could be expected to have a mind closed to truth. That is not desirable nor wise, but suicidal.

But, after all, are there not some things that we can believe? Is not the Bible the only sufficient rule for our faith and our practice? If some of these modern ideas and theories come into conflict with its teachings, have we not a right to believe and expect the Bible to be right and modern theories wrong? Or shall we calmly close the Book and open our minds to every passing whim and theory which so abound today?

On that first Easter Sunday evening two men were on the way from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Heartbroken, discouraged and dejected, they went their weary way. A stranger joined them, inquired the reason for their sadness, and they were surprised at his apparent ignorance. They said, "Art thou a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?"

On the day of Pentecost when the Apostle Peter preached to his fellow countrymen the sermon which was used of God to turn three thousand men and women to the Lord, it was really an opening of the Scriptures. There was nothing very remarkable about the sermon, judged by homiletical standards, but it was effective and the apostle's use of Scripture was justified by the results.

When Stephen, the first Christian martyr, made his famous defense before the council, he wasted no time in finely spun theories or explanations, but opened to them the Scriptures. He recited the ancient glory of their fathers, reminded them how wonderfully God had dealt with His people in giving them deliverance from their oppressors, yet how they had turned from Him to their own counsels and to their own ways, and then cried, "Ye stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do ye."

What was the effect of such preaching? We read, "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart." We see again fulfilled that declaration, "Thy Word is sharper than any two-edged sword."

The Christian Church today stands in some respects like these two disciples and these two congregations. Jesus has been taken away and they do not know where He is. They are uncertain about Him, about His character, about His deity, about His mission and purpose in the world and they are confused and troubled. Shall we say to the Church, "Open your mind. Become acquainted with all the changing theories of the changing hour"? Or shall we tell them to do as Jesus and the early preachers did, open the closed Book of Life, drink deep

from its well of living water, sit humbly at the feet of those inspired men who in an age dark and troubled held forth the certain light of God's grace? We believe that "the entrance of Thy Word giveth light."

Every preacher of the Gospel has noted, sometimes with surprise, yet always with delight, the way in which his congregations will respond to Bible teaching. Let the preacher begin to tell the Bible story. Tell it simply and reverently and with due regard to the proper understanding and explanation of what he tells, and immediately his congregation is awake. They love to hear the Bible and how foolish we are as preachers not to use it more. It is a sad fact that our people do not know God's Word first-hand and while we could wish that they did, this thing is certain, if the preacher wants to tell his people anything new, he can find it in God's Word. It is the supreme business of the minister and of the Church to set forth the truths of God's Holy Word, and there is no man under heaven that has a more exalted mission nor one more satisfying and productive of eternal results than the preacher who Sunday after Sunday faithfully preaches the Word.

It seems to me that what we deeply need today is not so much the open mind as the open Bible. As a matter of fact the open mind has been in numerous instances productive of untold harm. A little reflection will convince anyone of this. We may become so broadminded as to become incapable of any strong conviction. This does not mean to shut out the truth, but while we are hearing the thousand and one voices which speak to us, we sometimes get fearfully confused before we are able to select the truth out of the great mass of error and misinformation. Who is to guide the open mind of the student? Certainly it will need some guidance.

To ascertain the will of God and to fulfill it is the highest destiny of mankind. We believe that our fathers were right when they said there were four ways to discover God's will for us. First, the Scriptures; second, providential circumstances; third, the conviction of our own highest judgment; and fourth, the inward impression of the Holy Spirit on our minds. These

four go together and when there is any conflict we may well hesitate before believing that that which appears to be God's will is really that and nothing more.

But note the primacy given to the Scriptures in this list. If providential circumstances, our own highest judgment or any inward impression of the Holy Spirit upon our minds contradicts what God has plainly revealed, we may be sure we are being deceived. (I think we can understand that the author means that if there is such a condition, the impression upon our minds is not that of the Holy Spirit. -Ed.) Safety lies in knowing the Scriptures. It is absolutely imperative that the Scriptures as a whole be read and studied if one is to have a well balanced and workable philosophy of life in which he seeks to find and to express the will of God concerning himself. Isolated texts of Scripture, wrested and distorted from the context, lifted out of the great body of truth, have been the source of fanaticism throughout the ages.

We plead for the open Bible. Place it not only in the hands of the leaders of the Church; keep it not only in the hearts and minds of the favored few; but let it be read by all and we will find, as we return to the faithful, reverent study of God's Holy Word, the spiritual fires of our own zeal and devotion rekindled. We will find it to be the sword of the Spirit, a weapon that will enable us to do valiantly for our Lord.

Give us the open Bible! Carried not in our pockets only, nor in our minds, but written in our hearts. Give us the open Bible! Let us practice its teachings, believe in its Giver and worship Him of Whom it speaks, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever.

Should all the forms which men devise
Assault my faith with treacherous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies
And bind Thy Gospel to my heart.

—From "Christian Faith and Life"
Selected by Daniel F. Wolf

Historical

THE MARTYRDOM OF SIMEON, BISHOP OF JERUSALEM

After Nero and Domitian, we have also been informed, that in the reign of the emperor whose times we are now recording, there was a partial persecution excited throughout the cities, in consequence of a popular insurrection. In this we have understood, also, that Simeon died as a martyr, who, we have shown, was appointed the second bishop of the church at Jerusalem. To this the same Hegesippus bears testimony, whose words we have already so often quoted. This author, speaking of certain heretics, superadds, that Simeon indeed, about this time having borne the accusation of Christian, although he was tortured for several days, and astonished both the judge and his attendants in the highest degree, terminated his life with sufferings like those of our Lord. But it is best to hear the writer himself, who gives the account as follows: "Of these heretics," says he, "some reported Simeon the son of Cleophas, as a descendant of David, and a Christian; and thus he suffered as a martyr, when he was a hundred and twenty years old, in the reign of the emperor Trajan, and the predidency of the consular Atticus." The same were of the tribe of David, his accusers, as if they were descended from this family, were taken in custody." One might reasonably assert that this Simeon was among the witnesses that bore testimony to what they had both heard and seen of our Lord, if we are to judge by the length of his life, and the fact that the gospels make mention of Mary the wife of Cleophas, whose son Simeon was, as we have already shown. But the same historian says, that there were others, the offspring of one of those considered brothers of the Lord, whose name was Judas, and that these lived until the same reign after their profession of Christ, and the testimony under Domitian before-mentioned. He writes thus: "There are also

those that take the lead of the whole church as martyrs, even the kindred of our Lord; and when profound peace was established throughout the church, they continued to the days of the emperor Trajan, until the time that the above-mentioned Simeon, the relative of our Lord, being the son of Cleophas, was waylaid by the heretics, and also himself accused for the same cause, under Atticus, who was of similar dignity. After he was tormented many days, he died a martyr, with such firmness, that all were amazed, even the president himself, that a man of a hundred and twenty years should bear such tortures. He was at last ordered to be crucified." The same author, relating the events of the times, also says, that the church continued until then as a pure and uncorrupt virgin; whilst if there were any at all, that attempted to pervert the sound doctrine of the saving gospel, they were yet skulking in dark retreats: but when the sacred choir of apostles became extinct, and the generation of those that had been privileged to hear their inspired wisdom had passed away, then also the combinations of impious error arose by the fraud and delusion of false teachers. These also, as there were none of the apostles left, henceforth attempted, without shame, to preach their false doctrine against the Gospel of truth." Such is the statement of Hegesippus.

—Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History

COMMUNION NOTICE

The Salida Congregation have agreed, the Lord willing, to hold our fall Love Feast on November 14 and 15 of this year. A hearty invitation and welcome is extended to all the brethren and sisters and friends to attend.

The Lord's day is a firm foundation upon which to build a six-story week.

—"Sunbeam"

HYMN STUDY

MY JESUS, AS THOU WILT

In 1718 there lived in the town of Schweidnitz, Germany, a humble Christian pastor, Benjamin Schmolke. For five years he had ministered to his flock and loved them and they loved him. But one awful day a fire raged over his parish, laying in ruins his church and the homes of his people. Then he wrote this hymn.

After that, death took his wife and children. Then his eyesight became dim. In 1737, while still their loved and faithful pastor, he died. And now on every anniversary of that dreadful fire they tell again in that little town the story of Benjamin Schmolke and sing again his hymn:

My Jesus, as Thou wilt!
Oh, may Thy will be mine!
Into Thy hand of love
I would my all resign;
Through sorrow, or through joy,
Conduct me as Thine own,
And help me still to say,
My Lord, Thy will be done!

My Jesus, as Thou wilt!
Though seen through many a tear,
Let not my star of hope
Grow dim or disappear;
Since Thou on earth hast wept,
And sorrowed oft alone,
If I must weep with Thee,
My Lord, Thy will be done!

My Jesus, as Thou wilt!
All shall be well for me;
Each changing future scene
I gladly trust with Thee:
Straight to my home above
I travel calmly on,
And sing, in life or death,
My Lord, Thy will be done!

from "Sunday School Messenger" - Sel. by Martha Cover

BIBLE CHARACTERS

ANANIAS

There are three distinctly different men named Ananias mentioned in the Acts, and each had a great influence on the early church.

The first was Ananias, husband of Saphira, who apparently made a start to serve the Lord but ended his life in attempting to lie to the Holy Ghost. He and his wife sold their land with the intention of joining the Christian community--perhaps for gain. It is plain from the words of Peter in Acts 5:4 that this land and even the money from it was theirs and in their control. But their mistake was in bringing only a part of the money to the apostles and claiming it was the whole amount. The punishment of Ananias was swift. He fell dead at Peter's feet as did his wife in her turn. Then "great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things." We cannot lie to God. Neither can we keep back part of ourselves when we come to serve Him.

The second Ananias was high priest at the time of Paul's trial in Acts 23 and 24. At this trial, he commanded Paul to be smitten on the mouth. Paul called him a "whited wall". When Paul was taken to Ceasarea to appear before Felix, Ananias, disregarding the dignity of his office, also went there to accuse him. But he took along a Roman orator, Tertullus, to speak for him against Paul. This man appears a proud, cruel, hypocrite priest at enmity with Paul and Christ's work. His life was no doubt a hindrance to the church, but God provided strength for His people in spite of the opposition from men like this. Ananias, nominated to office by Herod in A.D. 48, was deposed in Felix's reign and assassinated at the beginning of the last Jewish war.

The third Ananias is the disciple at Damascus sent to heal and minister to Saul at his conversion. He was a devout man and had a good report among the Jews at Damascus. When the Lord in a vision spoke to him about Saul, he protested that this man had done evil among the saints at Jerusalem and had even come to Damascus for the same purpose. But the Lord told him that Saul was a chosen

vessel to Him. Then Ananias willingly went to Saul and even greeted him as "Brother Saul". He delivered God's message of hope that was to change Saul's life: "The Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost."

This Ananias is an example of Christian usefulness. He proved to be an obedient, willing, forgiving servant of the Lord Jesus. Men like this God uses for the accomplishing of His glorious purposes. —L.C.

TODAY I MET A MAN

Today I met a man
Whose twisted form bore marks
Of misery and woe.
His steps were halting as he walked
To places he would go.
Thought I, how fortunate that God
Has kept me sound in limb,
Though I've complained so many times
To Him when paths seem dim.

Today I met a man
Whose speech and manners
And a winning smile,
Did much to lift me up until
I saw his heart of guile.
'Twas then I lost the confidence
That had inspired my heart,
I could not trust his good advice
When we at last did part.

Today I met a man
Whose every word was filled
With ardent praise,
Who praised his God for keeping him
In all His ways.
And when I saw his face
And heard his humble, thankful voice,
It lifted me above the clouds
And made my heart rejoice. —Russel P. Hill
sel. by Martha Cover

CHILDREN'S PAGE

WATER FOR TIRED TRAVELERS

On their long, LONG trip to a new land, God took care of His people, the children of Israel, every minute.

So when the people became thirsty, they drank water out of the jars and water bags they carried with them. Of course, there were no faucets or drinking fountains along the way, And every time the jars and water bags were empty, God's people found water and filled them all up again, And then on they would go, following the cloud which God sent to lead them.

But ONE time--their jars and water bags became emptier, and EMPTIER. The people became thirstier and THIRSTIER. And they did not see water ANYWHERE!

On they walked in the hot sun. On and on and ON. The people were thirsty. Moses, their leader was thirsty. All the people and all the animals became thirstier and thirstier. Then Moses said, "God is still taking care of us. Let's go on a little farther." So on they walked, until--"There! Up ahead! Trees! Lots of trees! Oh, hurry, hurry to those trees!"

And sure enough! Under the trees were wells of water--deep holes in the ground filled with cool, clear water. There were not just two or three wells. But there were one, two, three--TWELVE wells of cool, clear water!

Oh how the tired and thirsty people drank! They FILLED their jars and water bags with the cool water. The children laughed and splashed. How glad they all were to rest and to drink the good water. They knew that God was still taking care of them! Read Exodus 15:27 and Numbers 33:8-10.

Doesn't a cool drink of water taste good when we are thirsty? Only God can make water. "God is good." (Psalm 73:1) The next time we drink water, we should remember to thank God for it.

O give thanks unto the Lord for he is good.
(Psalm 136:1)

—R.S.

THE PILGRIM

VOL. 11

NOVEMBER, 1964

NO. 11

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

THE GOD OF HARVEST PRAISE

The God of harvest praise,
In loud thanksgiving raise
Hand, heart, and voice;
The valleys laugh and sing,
Forests and mountains ring,
The plains their tribute bring,
The streams rejoice.

Yea, bless His holy name,
And purest thanks proclaim
Through all the earth;
To glory in your lot
Is comely, but be not
God's benefits forgot
Amid your mirth.

The God of harvest praise.
Hands, hearts, and voices raise
With sweet accord;
From field to garner throng,
Bearing your sheaves along,
And in your harvest song
Bless ye the Lord.

James Montgomery

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published monthly in the interests of the members of The Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$1.50 per year. Sample copies sent free on request. Publishing Editor: Leslie Cover; Consulting Editor: Daniel F. Wolf. Address: THE PILGRIM, Star Route, Box 1160, Sonora, Calif.

THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving Day here in America historically has been a time of reunion, feasting, giving thanks, and celebrating the end of another harvest season. It is peculiar to the United States and Canada but is somewhat similar to the harvest festivals of other countries. The first American Thanksgiving Day was celebrated on December 13, 1621 by the Plymouth colonists of Massachusetts. It was truly a time of rejoicing as the first winter in the new land had been so severe. Nearly half the members of the colony had died. But the summer brought new hopes, and the corn harvest was good. Governor William Bradford decreed that this day be set aside as a day to show their gratitude to God. Tradition says that the neighboring Indians came bringing wild turkey and venison to help celebrate. Everyone helped prepare the food and set up large tables outdoors for the three day feast and time of thanksgiving, singing, and prayer.

The custom of setting aside a certain day for thanksgiving each year gradually spread through the New England colonies and later through the states. For years some states proclaimed the holiday officially and some did not. Finally, in 1863 through the efforts of Mrs. Sarah Josepha Hale, the day was proclaimed a national holiday by President Abraham Lincoln "as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father." In Canada a day is also set aside on the second Monday in October.

I am sure that the early Thanksgiving Days were more meaningful than they are in most homes today. They must have felt real dependence on God for their sustenance in the new land, and when they could look back at a bountiful harvest, a day of thanksgiving was the result. Too often now the day becomes only a day of

feasting without a real meaning except for certain nostalgic memories from childhood of a pleasant day of family reunion and good food.

But let the thought of thanksgiving go deeper than this for Christian people. It should be more than just a holiday in November. Like the first Thanksgiving Day, our thanks should come from a recognition of God's great favors to us. When even the smallest gift or favor is given us by a friend we say "thank you" and usually mean it. Are we as ready to offer our thanks to our Lord about whom it is said "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."? Variableness means changeableness or inconstancy. God is constant and unchangeable, and His gifts come continually. Can we not pause to thank the Lord as we thank each other?

Though we may not all have harvests of crops, there are many ways that we reap harvests and receive benefits from God. We only have to look around us to see the endless numbers of blessings--health, happiness, the comforts of home, food, freedom... Then we think of the greatest gift of all time when God sent our Lord Jesus Christ to the world that men might be saved. This Gift deserves thanksgiving from every heart continually.

Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing. (Psalms 107:21,22)
(Information from "World Book Encyclopedia") —L.C.

Thanksgiving comes but once a year,
And yet the whole year round,
The heart of love, the heart of cheer
Will make a joyful sound;
And we who keep Christ's loving way
Will have Thanksgiving every day.

Eleanor Halbrook Zimmerman

THE GOODNESS OF GOD IN THE
REDEMPTION OF ISRAEL

Anciently God had a chosen people, for in Deuteronomy 7:6,7,8 we read, "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people." To ever hold this identity they were not to let their sons or daughters to intermarry with other nations. When Balaam was restrained by God from cursing Israel, he said, "How can I curse whom God hath not cursed? or how can I defy whom God hath not defied? For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."

Thus it is evident that God's purpose for Israel was to be a distinct people and apart from other nations. And for their government God gave them the law from Mt. Sinai as well as many other ceremonies and directives to lead them after He had delivered them from Pharaoh's bondage. So long as Israel was obedient to God's commandment and laws, He favored them and delivered them from their enemies, but when they disobeyed, He withdrew His favors from them, and no doubt in great displeasure, He finally scattered them to the four winds, and to every nation under heaven. In I Kings 7 it is said of them, "Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them... And Israel shall be a proverb, and a byword among all people."

And thus for many centuries Israel groaned and suffered as exiles in strange lands. But in all this the Almighty One never wholly forsook them as declared by the apostle Paul in Romans 11:1, "Hath God cast away his people? God forbid for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

(Verse 2) God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew."

Well, in the fullness of time Jesus the Great Messiah came, first to His own, but as a nation they received Him not. But to them that did receive Him: to them gave He power to become the sons of God, who later with the Gentiles (who accepted Him) became the Church of Christ. "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Jesus told them, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." But nothing would gratify their blind ambitions but His crucifixion.

But now today, we who are living in these eventful days can see as it were what our fathers and grandfathers could only see through the eye of faith. And this is definitely revealed in prophetic writings that it shall be in the last days. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." And may we not conclude that the times of the Gentiles is swiftly ebbing to its close?

Israel's return to their ancient homeland is profusely declared by God's Holy Prophets. For just a few testimonies we will refer to Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. Isaiah 14:1-3: "For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors. And it shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from thy hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve."

Jeremiah 32:37-40: "Behold I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I

will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

Ezekiel 36:24-27: "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

For the last sixteen years these precious prophecies have been going into fulfillment in the state of Israel which has now reached a population of around 2½ million, with numerous immigrants entering her shores daily; this all in the face of hostile Arab nations all around her who are bent and determined on her destruction, as foretold in Psalm 83, "For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, come, and let us cut them off from being a nation that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee." Will God be defeated in His plans? Never, no never.

We will quote from a letter last week in the "Jerusalem Post Weekly" written by a visitor to Israel from Austria: "Pages would not be sufficient to express my feelings in full of my admiration and my love for this brave country which has not hesitated to devote itself to the aims of a gigantic rebuilding job, which would seem quite impossible to any realist. But as your old and wise David Ben-gurion says, 'In that land nobody

is a realist who doesn't believe in miracles.' and heaven knows I learned in Israel to believe in wonders."

What an impressive message of the angel to Mary, the mother of Jesus. "Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." This yet future event should stimulate the hearts of all who love the Lord.

—David A. Skiles
Rossville, Indiana

LORD I THANK THEE

Lord I thank Thee for Thy care,
Every day and everywhere;
Willing now to be my guide
That I may in Thee confide.

The rich blessings of Thy love
Coming daily from above
Fills my life that I may bless
Thee, my source of happiness.

And when burdened down with care
Helps that I do not despair;
Shows the way to peace and rest,
That no evil may molest.

When sweet rest in Thee I found,
Where Thy grace did more abound
Daily I Thy help did bless,
Overcoming sinfulness.

Thou hast blest me all my days,
And Thy saving power displays.
Guide and guard me to the end:
On Thy mercy I depend.

When my day comes to its close,
May I rest in calm repose.
May I as Thy face I see,
Thank Thee all eternity.

—J.I.Cover

EDITORIAL....

Jesus said before Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." Peter wrote in I Peter 2: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light... Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul... Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."

These and other scriptures teach us about the separateness of Christ's kingdom from the governments of the world. It is plain that the kingdom Jesus told Pilate of is the one to which Christians belong and that Christ is our King. At the time Jesus spoke these words, the government was sitting in judgment over our King. Down through the ages since that time, the people of the kingdom of Christ often have also been on trial before the governments of the world. They realized then how separate they were from these powers which persecuted them. In our country we see a different situation in which our government is favorable to Christ's kingdom and even protects its privileges, and how thankful we should be for it. But it is still just as true that these are two separate kingdoms.

Now how far should Christians go toward participation in this other kingdom? Many scriptures tell of a Christian's duty to obey the laws of the countries, but is it our duty to actually take part in making

laws and electing government officials? The scriptures rather speak of our relationship to the governments as of strangers and pilgrims in a foreign land. Strangers do not participate in the government but are to obey the laws as well as the natives. Just as foreigners in a strange land are to obey laws and have good conduct for the sake and honor of their own country and king, so are Christians to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. In a sense, we represent Him here to the people of the governments of this world.

It is said that Christians must vote in elections to help maintain good government and to help elect the best candidate. Christians should not be lax in matters of duty. If it is our duty to vote for this reason, then it is also the duty of the Church to participate in and even to lead election campaigns. By the same reasoning, it would be the duty of "The Pilgrim" and other Church publications to strongly support the "best candidate".

But does the Church belong in the political field with all its deception, propaganda, boasting, and "mud-slinging". Can Christians claim to be a part of a government that goes to war when Christ taught us to love our enemies? Can the Church whose principles include "overcome evil with good" be a part of a force that retaliates with all the powers known including the the fearful atomic bombs?

The faithful of past ages confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Our citizenship is in Heaven, and we are "fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. (Ephesians 2:19) Let us obey the laws of the government of this world and pray for its rulers, but let us be real partakers and participators in the kingdom of Christ.

Jesus prayed to the Father, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world." (John 17:14-18)

Our King does not ask us to withdraw from society. But He has sent us into the world, not to become part of it but to be witnesses to it. —L.C.

HYMN STUDY

NEARER, MY GOD, TO THEE

Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!
E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.

Though like a wanderer, daylight all gone,
Darkness be over me, my rest a stone:
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.

There let the way appear, steps unto Heaven;
All that Thou sendest me, in mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.

Then with my waking tho'ts, bright with Thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs, Bethel I'll raise;
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.

Or, if, on joyful wing, cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot, upward I fly;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.

"Nearer, My God, to Thee" was composed by Sarah Flower Adams in about 1840. She was born at Harlow, England on February 22, 1805 and died there in 1848 from tuberculosis.

Some attempts were made to evangelize "Nearer, My God, to Thee" by those who were dissatisfied because

Mrs. Adams was a Unitarian, but the hymn remains today just as she wrote it. It is more like one of the beautiful Psalms than the New Testament scriptures, but it has had an important place in the hearts of true Christians for over a century. It seems the desire of the writer was to be very near to God, and we can be sure when one has this attitude he is not very close to sin. We read in James 4:8, "Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you."

In 1912, when the great ship "Titanic" was sinking, the band played and the people sang "Nearer, My God, to Thee" as they realized that the end was near.

"Nearer, My God, to Thee" was on the lips of President McKinley as he lay dying from an assassin's bullet. Also President Teddy Roosevelt was said to be most fond of it.

In the year of 1905 on a Sunday in November, a forger who had been a fugitive from justice for eight years, ventured into a Pittsburg theater where a religious service was being held, to hear the music. Upon hearing "Nearer, My God, to Thee" he was so overcome that he went out weeping bitterly. He walked the floor of his room all night and in the morning telephoned for the police, confessed his name and crime, and surrendered himself to be taken back to the Boston authorities.

How thankful we should be for this divinely inspired hymn, for it truly expresses the deep longing of the soul for communion and fellowship with our Heavenly Father.

—J.L.C.

COMMUNION NOTICE

The Salida Congregation have agreed, the Lord willing, to hold our fall Love Feast on November 14 and 15 of this year. A hearty invitation and welcome is extended to all the brethren and sisters and friends to attend.

—Daniel F. Wolf

OBITUARY

MYRON J. KINSLEY

Myron J. Kinsley, son of David and Sarah (Royer) Kinsley, was born November 25, 1876, near Hartville, Ohio, and peacefully passed away in his home the night of May 12, 1964, at the age of 87 years, 5 months, and 17 days. He had been afflicted with asthma the last few years of his life, and bore it very patiently. During this time he realized the blessed privilege of the anointing service, which was administered.

He was united in marriage to Cora E. Bower November 27, 1898, to whom were born 2 daughters: Keturah Isabel and Virginia Mary. This union was broken by the passing of his companion on July 25, 1906. He again was united in marriage to Fannie Mohler on March 27, 1907, who tenderly helped care for the two little daughters. She also preceded him in death March 5, 1935. He was again united in marriage to Blanche Gantt on November 28, 1936, who survives him. Also surviving are the 2 daughters: Keturah Skiles and Virginia Beckner; 1 foster daughter, Mrs. Thelma Bagwell; 7 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; 3 brothers: William, Daniel, and Emery, and 1 sister, Emma Blocher.

At an early age he responded to the call of the Spirit and was baptized into the Old German Baptist Church. He labored several years in the deacon's office, and about the year 1908 was called to the ministry, and later advanced to the eldership. In later years he was affiliated with the Old Brethren. He will be lovingly remembered by his friendly smiles and loving disposition by the family and all who knew him.

The Family

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Revelation 14:13

Historical

ACTS OF THE SCILLITAN MARTYRS

This is the official narrative of the trial of certain Christians from Scili in Africa before the proconsul Vigellius Saturninus. The date is 180 A.D.

When Praesens, for the second time, and Claudianus were the consuls, on the seventh day of July, at Carthage, there were set in the judgment-hall Speratus, Nartzalus, Cittinus, Donata, Secunda and Vestia.

Saturninus the proconsul said: Ye can win the indulgence of our lord the Emperor, if ye return to a sound mind.

Speratus said: We have never done ill, we have not lent ourselves to wrong, we have never spoken ill, but when ill-treated we have given thanks; because we pay heed to our Emperor.

Saturninus the proconsul said: We too are religious, and our religion is simple, and we swear by the genius of our lord the Emperor, and pray for his welfare, as ye also ought to do.

Speratus said: If thou wilt peaceably lend me thine ears, I can tell thee the mystery of simplicity.

Saturninus said: I will not lend mine ears to thee, when thou beginnest to speak evil things of our sacred rites; but rather swear thou by the genius of our lord the Emperor.

Speratus said: The empire of this world I know not; but rather I serve that God, whom no man hath seen, nor with these eyes can see. I have committed no theft; but if I have bought anything I pay the tax; because I know my Lord, the King of kings and Emperor of all nations.

Saturninus the proconsul said to the rest: Cease to be of this persuasion.

Speratus said: It is an ill persuasion to do murder, to speak false witness.

Saturninus the proconsul said: Be not partakers of

this folly.

Cittinus said: We have none other to fear, save only our Lord God, who is in heaven.

Donata said: Honour to Caesar as Caesar: but fear to God.

Vestia said: I am a Christian.

Secunda said: What I am, that I wish to be.

Saturninus the proconsul said to Speratus: Dost thou persist in being a Christian?

Speratus said: I am a Christian. And with him they all agreed.

Saturninus the proconsul said: Will ye have a space to consider?

Speratus said: In a matter so straightforward there is no considering.

Saturninus the proconsul said: What are the things in your chest?

Speratus said: Books and epistles of Paul, a just man.

Saturninus the proconsul said: Have a delay of thirty days and bethink yourselves.

Speratus said a second time: I am a Christian. And with him they all agreed.

Saturninus the proconsul read out the decree from the tablet: Speratus, Nartzalus, Cittinus, Donata, Vestia, Secunda and the rest having confessed that they live according to the Christian rite, since after opportunity offered them of returning to the custom of the Romans they have obstinately persisted, it is determined that they be put to the sword.

Speratus said: We give thanks to God.

Nartzalus said: Today we are martyrs in heaven; thanks be to God.

Saturninus the proconsul ordered it to be declared by the herald: Speratus, Nartzalus, Cittinus, Veturius, Felix, Aquilinus, Laetantius, Januaria, Generosa, Vestia, Donata and Secunda, I have ordered to be executed.

They all said: Thanks be to God.

And so they all together were crowned with martyrdom; and they reign with the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

—"Selections from Early Christian Writers"

CHILDREN'S PAGE

THANKSGIVING

"O give thanks unto the Lord for He is Good."

Psalms 136:1

"Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God and a great King above all gods."

Psalms 95:2-3

Thanksgiving Day is just around the corner. What does this day mean to us? I think of going to Grandfather's house to be with all of the uncles and aunts and cousins. I smell the warm, spicy pumpkin pies that Grandmother always made. I see Grandmother working happily over the big tom turkey that used to strut proudly around the barnyard. I hear Grandmother humming the old Christian hymn, "Come Ye Thankful People Come" as she busies herself about the large, old fashioned kitchen in last minute preparations. Because of the new-fallen snow, I see Grandfather opening a path to the drive. Thanksgiving may mean all of this to us, but it should also mean much more.

Thanksgiving is never confined to any single day or time, but is something that we can and should be doing NOW! Thanksgiving Day may never come. God appreciates our thanksgiving today. We should be glad and thank God that we have a national holiday set aside for thanksgiving; however, God is only pleased with the thanks that comes from a Christian heart of love. The people who do not know Jesus as their Saviour can never please God with their thanksgiving.

There is still much more to thanksgiving. Ephesians 5:20 says, "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." It isn't so hard to be thankful with Thanksgiving turkey on the table, with loved ones all around us, and with a comfortable house to protect us from the cold. But how about it if we are hungry and have little food to eat? How about it if we are not close to families or loved ones? How about it if we have

((Continued on page 16))

BIBLE CHARACTERS

ENOCH

Enoch was the son of Jared and the father of Methuselah, the seventh from Adam.

One may say Enoch was a type of perfected humanity, "a man raised to Heaven by pleasing God."

His faithfulness to God must have been great as the scriptures tell us that he walked with God for three hundred years after his son, Methuselah, was born. "And he was not: for God took him."

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. (Hebrews 11:5)

We have record of one other such translation which was Elijah.

By some it is believed that Enoch is to be one of the two witnesses of which we read about in Revelations 11:3.

—Roger Skiles
Wakarusa, Indiana

(Children's Page continued)

no phone to call home? The Bible teaches that we should always be thankful for all things. We really do have much to be thankful for!. We should be thankful to God for supplying our needs. He knew how much we needed a saviour, and He graciously supplied His only Son. We can be thankful from the depth of our souls for the precious blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses us from all sins. —R.S.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

Psalms 100:4

THE PILGRIM

VOL. 11

DECEMBER, 1964

NO. 12

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11

"Unto you is born this day a Saviour"
Which is Jesus Christ the wondrous Lord;
Not a "teacher", not a "good example",
But the Son of God, the Living Word.

No "philosopher", his fancies weaving,
Warp of dreams and woof of visions vast,
Not a "prophet", peering down the future,
Not a "scholar", delving in the past.

"Unto you is born this day a Saviour;"
Shine, O star! and shout, O angel voice!
Unto you this precious gift is given;
Sing, O earth! and all ye Heavens, rejoice!

Long the world has waited such a Saviour,
Sunk in sin and torn by fear and doubt;
Long in darkness groped for truth and wisdom;
Glory, glory, now the light shines out!

"Unto you is born this day a Savior,"
Earth's one hope, the Life, the Truth, the Way,
Mighty God and glorious Redeemer,
Jesus Christ the Lord is born today.

—Annie Johnson Flint
Selected

THE PILGRIM is a religious magazine published monthly in the interests of the members of The Old Brethren Church. Subscription rate: \$1.50 per year. Sample copies sent free on request. Publishing Editor: Leslie Cover; Consulting Editor: Daniel F. Wolf. Address: THE PILGRIM, Star Route, Box 1160, Sonora, Calif.

FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN!

Isaiah prophesied of the birth of Christ about 700 years before Jesus was born. The prophet Micah named Bethlehem as the place of His birth. The virgin Mary was told before, by the angel Gabriel, that the son which would be born of her would be called Jesus. At this time of year it is only normal for the Christian to think more about the birth of their Lord and Saviour Jesus the Christ.

The only begotten Son of God humbled Himself to be born of a woman and take on a body of flesh and blood that He might be an example for man to follow. The birth of Jesus was the miracle of the age. It was heralded by angels to the shepherds on the hills of Bethlehem. What a marvelous inspiration when the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. ...Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And the heavenly host sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

We are apt to overlook the immensity of what happened when Christ was born. Jesus was the express image of the Father in glory. He is called the Word of God from the beginning. "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made"; He was a co-creator with the Father. (John 1:1-3) Man, the earth, the stars, sun, and moon, animals, vegetation—all things as we see and know them were created by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This Jesus was a part of the Trinity of God whom all the power and the forces of creation obeyed to perfection. "...And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace!"

It is beyond our comprehension that such a mighty

being would be willing to visit mankind as the humblest of men—even to be born as a babe in a manger, because there was no room for Him in the inn. This birth of Jesus was a miracle that we cannot explain except to repeat what is written: "Now the birth of Jesus was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child of the Holy Ghost." And: "Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

Shepherds were the first to see the Christ child, and it seemed to be their privilege to tell others the story of the angel concerning the child Jesus. How humble an entrance into this world was the birth of Jesus! With all the business of tax collecting in little Bethlehem, the birth of the Son of God was so unnoticed. If mankind had realized who it was and how royal His being, no palace would have been too good. Joseph and Mary were both direct descendents of David the king, so Jesus was actually born a king through the royal line of David.

"Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him." Thus spoke the wise men to Herod. "And thou Bethlehem in the land of Juda, art not least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people, Israel." "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh." Wise men of the east—representatives of nations outside of God's chosen people—came and worshipped the little Lord Jesus, having followed a star which had been foretold. Evidently records had been faithfully preserved, and when the star appeared, they knew what it meant.

Jesus was born in this world to die, and that by cruel hands. His death was to pay for the sins of the world, and open the way for man to regain his fellow-

ship with God. Although it seems to us that His sacrifice on the cross was the important thing, it was also necessary that Jesus be born a little baby and grow up to manhood tempted in all points as we--yet without sin. He lived a life that showed us how to live. He brought the love of God to man.

We do not know the exact date of Jesus' birth, but we do know that He was born. The promise of a Redeemer was now fulfilled, and man could look forward to a better day. December 25th is celebrated in the Christian world as the birthday of Christ. It seems that people in general have a better feeling one for the other at this time. Gifts are exchanged, and children especially have a happy time. We hope that Christian parents will tell their children the true story of the birth of Jesus and what it means to them.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given!" Let us remember how great that child was and how the Father "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, might not perish, but have everlasting life."

—Rudolph E. Cover
Sonora, California

WATCH YE THEREFORE, AND PRAY ALWAYS, THAT YE MAY BE ACCOUNTED WORTHY TO ESCAPE ALL THESE THINGS THAT SHALL COME TO PASS, AND TO STAND BEFORE THE SON OF MAN.

(Luke 21:36)

This is a most glorifying message connected with the otherwise somber and somewhat gloomy prediction of this latter-day chapter. Men's hearts will be failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

It could be that this scripture when singled out from the entire revealed word of the New Testament scripture could give us a mistaken interpretation of its true design and purpose, and is perhaps so looked at by many modern religionists. For the idea held by

many that the Church will be in Glory at the time of the great tribulation that will come in the latter days does not seem to fully harmonize with the entire revelation of our Lord. That the true child of God will escape from the awful judgment of God upon the wicked, when He will destroy them with the breath of His mouth and cast them into the everlasting torments of hell is beyond question, and sure. But that the righteous will fully escape the assaults of the beast, the man of sin, and the antichrist is not sustained by Holy Scripture. The innumerable throng which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. In questioning who these were, the elder said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Revelation 7) Here, we must believe, are the saved and redeemed of all ages, gone through great tribulation. Yet the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. What an escape from the wiles of the wicked one! And also what horrible destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power!

That the righteous may be caught in the snares of the evil one in trial of their faith is evidenced by the words of the Apostle Paul in speaking to his son Timothy, (chapter 3:12) "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." This is the equivalent of tribulation.

Daniel was caught in the snares of the evil one, but what an escape from the lion's mouths! Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were caught in the fiery furnace, but what an escape! Innocent Joseph was shamefully caught and imprisoned, but God was with him, and what an escape! Our blessed Jesus was caught in matchless tribulation, and the evil ones were sure they had Him safely sealed in the tomb, but what an escape! How many faithful ones of the past suffered the martyrs'

death and thereby escaped the awful condemnation of the wicked. Only by the grace of God can any one triumph in such a trying hour. Truly the words of the text: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always" speak of a God-given essential, necessity, and privilege to fortify the child of God for every trial and emergency.

Who of us in this precious time and land of liberty can fully evaluate and appreciate the favors and blessings we enjoy. It would seem illogical that if the Church would be caught up to be with the Lord prior to the great tribulation, that the beast could then make war with the saints on earth, (Revelation 13:7) because the saints would all be in glory. With all this let us remember that of ourselves we can do nothing, and that the "Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

That the child of God is not immune from tribulation is evidenced by the words of I Peter 4:12: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." In the great consumation of this age there will be two distinct harvests, evidently in close succession as shown in Revelation 14:14 to the end of the chapter. The first sickle is to reap the elect from the four winds of the earth. The second sickle is to reap the harvest for the great winepress of the wrath of God. Who can measure the victorious escape from this latter sickle and be in the harvest of the former?

—David A. Skiles
Rossville, Indiana

On Friday, November 13, the members of the Salida congregation met in council and elected Brother Joseph L. Cover to the ministry. May the Lord bless him and his companion in their new responsibilities and may the church be profited by his ministry.

In behalf of the church,
Daniel F. Wolf

WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT DISCIPLESHIP

by George R. Brunk, Jr.

Jesus wasted no time and minced no words on the matter. He made it abundantly plain that a great deal is involved in one's becoming a Christian. To the superficial observer it might appear that Jesus made the way of discipleship too difficult and that He appeared to be pushing people away from Himself when they showed interest in Him. This, of course, is not true, but it is true that Jesus said some very shocking things. To the lady who came requesting that her two sons might sit on each side of Him in His kingdom, He raised the matter of suffering that would be involved, instead of complimenting her for her interest and concern for her boys. To the man who came excitedly to Jesus, telling Him that he wished to go with Him everywhere He went, Jesus cast up this difficulty that foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but "the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." When Jesus was being followed by a great multitude of people, according to Luke 13, He turned and said, "You cannot be my disciple." What a shock it must have been to His hearers that day when they heard Him speak of the cross that they must carry if they would follow Him, and when they heard Him say "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple."

Those today who find themselves offering an easy way must stand embarrassed in the presence of such words that were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ. Where we angle and advertize for large crowds, and enjoy publishing the figures, Jesus seemed to be more or less afraid of the multitude and of the superficial nature of their interest. Where we find ourselves over-simplifying the way of salvation and the meaning of discipleship, Jesus makes it plain that there are deepseated and far reaching implications. Where we are found guilty of doing a lip service that says "Lord, Lord", but does not do the things that He says, Jesus makes it plain that discipleship cuts deeply into the individual's life, inter-

feres radically with his former habits, and involves recognition of the Master's lordship over all.

Jesus must have been very much afraid that there would be those who would quickly receive His message without giving consideration to all that was involved, and that there would be those who would take the initial steps in salvation but fail to follow through, and as a result would be a disgrace to Him and to His Church.

There is a flood tide of sentiment abroad in Christendom today which is moving the masses in churches and denominations to a common ground of religious life which actually repudiates the teaching of Christ on obedience. It gives the people the false hope that they can walk on the broad road and still pass through the narrow gate that leads into the city at last. It professes to center its message in Christ, but turns a deaf ear to the things that He said. But Jesus' question still is, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord and do not the things that I say?" What a "discovery" some people are making today, that one can be a Christian without following Christ and His word.

It is probable that only a fraction of those today who profess to be disciples of Jesus Christ are disciples indeed. Jesus said that many will be travelling on the broad road, while there will be few who are willing to take the strait and narrow way. He warned that "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: . . . And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand."

—"The Sword and Trumpet", 1959
Selected by Daniel F. Wolf

Historical

Our historical column for this issue is a portion of the "First Apology" of Justin, the philosopher and martyr, written sometime between 138 and 150 A.D. Justin owed his conversion to an old man he met on the seashore, perhaps at Ephesus. He continued to wear the philosopher's cloak, and taught as a philosopher at Rome, where he was put to death (163-167).

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

But I will explain how we also dedicated ourselves to God when we were made new through Christ, lest by passing it over I should seem in any way unfair in my explanation. As many as are persuaded and believe that the things are true which are taught by us and said to be true, and promise that they can live accordingly--they are taught to pray and to ask of God with fasting, forgiveness of their former sins, and we pray and fast together with them. Then they are brought by us to a place where there is water, and born again with a new birth even as we ourselves were born again. For in the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit do they then receive the washing in water. For Christ said, "Except ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." But that it is impossible for those once born to enter into the wombs of their mothers is manifest to all. ...And this washing is called Enlightenment, because those who learn these things have their understanding enlightened...

But after having thus washed him that is persuaded and has given his assent, we bring him to where the brethren, as they are called, are gathered together, to make earnest prayers in common for ourselves and for the newly enlightened, and for all others everywhere, that we may be counted worthy after we have

learned the truth, by our works also to be found right liver and keepers of the commandments, that we may be saved with the eternal salvation. We salute each other with a kiss when our prayers are ended. Afterwards is brought to the president of the brethren bread and a cup of water and (mixed) wine, and he takes it and offers up praise and glory to the Father of the universe through the name of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and gives thanks at length, that we have received these favours from Him; and at the end of his prayers and thanksgiving the whole people present responds, saying Amen. Now the word "Amen" in the Hebrew language signifies "So be it." Then after the president has given thanks and all the people responded, the deacons as we call them allow every one of those present to partake of the bread and wine and water for which thanks have been given; and for those absent they take away a portion.

And this food is called by us Eucharist, and it is not lawful for any man to partake of it but he who believes our teaching to be true, and has been washed with the washing which is for the forgiveness of sins and unto a new birth, and is so living as Christ commanded. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but like as Jesus Christ our Saviour being made flesh through the word of God took both flesh and blood for our salvation, so also were we taught that the food for which thanks are given by the word of prayer that comes from Him--food by which blood and flesh by conversion are nourished, is both flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. For the Apostles in the memoirs which they composed, which are called Gospels, thus delivered that command was given them--that Jesus took bread and gave thanks and said, "This do in remembrance of me, this is my body;" and that He likewise took the cup, and after He had given thanks said, "This is my blood," and gave of it only to them. Which the evil demons imitated, commanding it to be done also in the mysteries of Mithras; for that bread and a cup of water are set forth with certain formulae in the ceremonial of initiation, you

either know or can learn.

But afterwards henceforth continually put each other in mind of these things, and those of us who are wealthy help all that are in want, and we always remain together. And for all things that we eat we bless the Maker of all through His Son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Spirit. And on the so-called day of the Sun there is a meeting of all of us who live in cities or the country, and the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time allows. Then when the reader has ceased, the president gives by word of mouth his admonition and exhortation to follow these excellent things. Afterwards we all rise at once and offer prayers; and as I said, when we have ceased to pray, bread is brought and wine and water, and the president likewise offers up prayers and thanksgivings to the best of his power, and the people responds with its Amen. Then follows the distribution to each and the partaking of that for which thanks were given; and to them that are absent a portion is sent by the hand of the deacons. Of those that are well to do and willing, every one gives what he will according to his own purpose, and the collection is deposited with the president, and he it is that succours orphans and widows, and those that are in want through sickness or any other cause, and those that are sojourning, and in short he has the care of all that are in need. Now we all hold our common meeting on the day of the Sun, because it is the first day, on which God changed the darkness and matter in His making of the world, and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead. For on the day before Saturn's they crucified Him; and on the day after Saturn's, which is the day of the Sun, He appeared to His Apostles and disciples and taught them these things, which we have offered to you also for consideration.

—"Selections from Early Christian Writers"

It is vain to use words when deeds are expected.

—"Sunday School Herald"

HYMN STUDY

CAROL, SWEETLY CAROL

by Fanny Crosby

Fanny Crosby (1820-1915) wrote more than 6000 hymns! She was born at Southeast, New York and became blind at the age of six weeks. Her education was at the New York Institution for the Blind where she later taught. She wrote many songs and poems but when she was forty five, decided to write only hymns. This was a very rewarding work for her as she claimed she was happy every day of her life. And how much joy and hope this blind hymn writer has brought to others who find inspiration from her words. Her hymns include "Safe in the Arms of Jesus", "I am Thine, O Lord", "Rescue the Perishing", "Pass Me Not", and "Blessed Assurance".

Kathleen Blanchard in "Stories of Wonderful Hymns" tells of the occasion on which Mrs. Crosby wrote this Christmas carol:

"It was just a year after writing 'Safe in the Arms of Jesus'—perhaps the favorite of her hymns—when one day toward the Christmas season Fanny Crosby attended a Bible meeting. The leader read Psalm 100 in a voice full of meaning: 'Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands... come before his presence with singing.'

"It seemed that she was lifted into an ecstasy of praise to the Maker of all things. In this entranced mood she expressed the angelic story poetically. Quickly her friends took down the words that fell from her lips almost faster than they could be written.

"This is the carol."

Carol, sweetly carol,
A Saviour born today;
Bear the joyful tidings,
O bear them far away:
Carol, sweetly carol,
Till earth's remotest bound
Shall hear the mighty chorus,
And echo back the sound.

(Chorus)

Carol, sweetly carol,
Carol sweetly today,
Bear the joyful tidings,
O bear them far away.

Carol, sweetly carol,
As when the angel throng
O'er the vales of Judah
Awoke the heavenly song:
Carol, sweetly carol,
Good will and peace and love,
Glory in the highest,
To God who reigns above.

Carol, sweetly carol,
The happy Christmas time;
Hark! the bells are pealing
Their merry, merry chime:
Carol, sweetly carol,
Ye shining ones above,
Sing in loudest numbers
O sing redeeming love.

(Information from "Stories of Wonderful Hymns" by
Kathleen Blanchard, and "World Book" encyclopedia.)L.C.

OBITUARY

EDWARD ROYER

Elder Edward Royer, oldest son of Urias and Sarah Bollinger Royer, was born near Hartville, Stark County, Ohio, March 23, 1875 and passed away November 12, 1964 at the age of 89 years 7 months and 20 days.

He grew to manhood in this same community and was highly respected by all his friends, both young and old.

He was united in marriage to Mary Leah Hershberger on January 27, 1901. They, together, were baptized into the church of their choice September 3, 1903. In a short while they were chosen to the deacon's office and a little later to the ministry. Duties

fell so hard and so fast. To this union were born three children, namely Sarah M. Wagoner, Delphi, Indiana; a son, David E., Rossville, Indiana; and Lydia J. Kinsley, Delphi, Indiana.

In the fall of 1918, the prevailing epidemic of flu took away his wife, Mary, which was hard for him to bear, but he was a good and kind father and kept his children together as a family.

On December 18, 1919 he was united in marriage to Ida E. Metzger near Rossville, Indiana. He brought his family and settled in the Rossville community and lived there a number of years. Again, after about seven years this companion was called away by death, January 20, 1927.

After a period of time he again was united in marriage to Leah Cripe of near Camden, Indiana, January 28, 1928. To this union were born two sons, namely Raymond of Goshen, Indiana and Herman of Nappanee, Indiana.

In later years they moved from the Rossville vicinity to near Camden, Indiana and from there to near Wakarusa, Indiana where he still was engaged in farming as long as he was able. They then moved to the little village of South West, Indiana where he lived a very contented life.

He had been very hard of hearing for a number of years and in failing health for the past while, so he called for the anointing of oil, which seemed to comfort him and make him feel more secure for what might soon be on ahead. He loathed strife and his council was for peace.

Surviving are his kind and loving companion who so tenderly cared for him; also his 5 children, 18 grandchildren, and 7 great-grandchildren, and a brother, Noah Royer of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

We, as a family, shall never forget his kind and friendly manner and patience.

GONE AWAY

Gone away at autumn closing, When the winter-time is near,
Time for rest in calm reposing, As the fields are brown and sere.
Gone away, life's day is waning And the lights are burning low;
Soul and spirit courage gaining--Knowing it is time to go.
Gone away, angels attending, Bearing spirits homeward way;
Starry stairway steps ascending, Leading to eternal day.
Gone away, we go to meet them, Through the breaker's dashing foam;
In Elysian Fields to greet them, When the saints are gathered home.
—Joseph I. Cover

CHILDREN'S PAGE

GOD'S WONDERFUL GIFT

Perhaps 750 years before Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary, God's prophet Isaiah foretold of this blessed event. He prophesied, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulders and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

People were looking for the Christ even from the time when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. How they must have longed for the Lamb of God which would take away the sin of the world! Thousands upon thousands of sheep, goats, and cattle had been offered as a remembrance of sin. But the Bible says that the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of an heifer could never take away sin. Only the precious blood of Jesus Christ which was offered once and for all can take away sin.

At this joyous season of the year we are very glad that Jesus was born into the world. We are always glad to read the wonderful story of the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night and the glorious angel chorus proclaiming the birth of the Lord Jesus. Our hearts are warmed by the beautiful songs of the nativity. Let us be truly glad that God saw our need for a saviour and by His divine grace and love sent His only Son to provide this need. Now He has invited all men to accept by faith Christ's wonderful work on our behalf and be saved.

This month we see Jesus in a manger. We must never forget why Jesus come into the world. The birth of Jesus is not the event that gives us salvation. Jesus came for the purpose of seeking and saving that which was lost. I was lost. All mankind was lost. We deserved to die because of sin. Jesus took upon Himself the sins of the world and died in our place. Now we can be back in fellowship with God. THANKS BE UNTO GOD FOR HIS UNSPEAKABLE GIFT. —R.S.

BIBLE CHARACTERS: JOSEPH

Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus, is one of the characters in the background of the great event of the birth of Christ into the world. He was a carpenter and likely was poor though he was of the royal line of the house of David. He must also have taught the carpenter's trade to Jesus, for in Matthew 13:55 Jesus is called "the carpenter's son", but in Mark 6:3 He is called "the carpenter".

By studying the characteristics of Joseph, we can realize why God chose him for the guardian of Jesus.

First, Joseph was a just man. "Just" means righteous, upright and fair. The Bible says that it was because Joseph was just that he was not willing to expose Mary, his betrothed wife, when he learned that she was with child. He was also thoughtful. The record says that it was while he thought on this situation that he received the answer. An angel appeared to him in a dream and revealed to him that Mary was innocent, that she was to bring forth a child of the Holy Ghost, and that Joseph should "call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." How many times would we receive answers to our problems if we would approach them the way Joseph did--justly and thoughtfully.

Joseph was also obedient. He was willing to accept the Lord's will and fill his role as the supposed father of Jesus. But this was not the end of the messages from the angel. At least twice more the angel appeared with directions for Joseph. He was told to go with his family to Egypt for the safety of the child Jesus. And Joseph went. He was also told to return when the danger was past. And Joseph returned and lived at Nazareth. His willingness to obey is another lesson for us.

According to prophecy, Jesus was to be born in Bethlehem, to be called out of Egypt, and to be called a Nazarene. And God used Joseph to bring this about.

Joseph was alive when Jesus was twelve, but must have died before His crucifixion. See Mark 6:3 and John 19:27.

—L.C.

We wish to thank all our contributors and subscribers for their interest in "The Pilgrim". Best wishes to all for happiness during the coming year.